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The Shape of Things

THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF TVA IS BEING established on a piecemeal basis. In 1936 the Supreme Court, with Justice McReynolds alone dissenting, held that the TVA was within its rights in acquiring the transmission lines of the Alabama Power Company, and that the federal government might sell electricity developed as part of a flood-control, navigation, or national-defense program. By a vote of five to two, Justices Butler and McReynolds dissenting and former Solicitor General Stanley F. Reed abstaining, the court has now ruled that private utilities in the TVA area have no right to protection from government competition. Justice Roberts, speaking for the majority, said that "local franchises, while having elements of property, confer no contractual or property right to be free from competition either from individuals, other public-utility corporations, or the state or municipality granting the franchise." In answer to allegations made by the fourteen private power companies which brought the suit, the Supreme Court upheld the finding of the District Court that the TVA "has not indulged in coercion, duress, fraud, or misrepresentation in procuring contracts with municipalities, cooperatives, or other purchasers of power; has not acted with any malicious or malevolent motive; and has not conspired with municipalities or other purchasers of power." The court declined to enjoin the TVA from building more dams, generating more power, or marketing power in the territory of the plaintiffs. There was a time when the Supreme Court could be depended upon to provide a convenient legalistic stockade against projects such as the TVA. That time is no more. Mr. Roosevelt's court battle was lost, but it begins to look as if a war had been won.

THE SENATE TORIES HAVE TRIUMPHED OVER the President and the unemployed and are now basking in the sunshine of press approval. It is true that in upholding the $150,000,000 WPA cut they added two conscience-saving amendments. Dismissals during the next two months are to be limited to 5 per cent of the rolls on February 1; and the President may apply for an

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additional appropriation if he can show that an emergency exists. Neither of these amendments suggests that the economy bloc has great faith in its claim that private industry will provide new jobs exceeding WPA dismissals. Business, it is argued, has received from Congress the gesture it has been awaiting and will now go ahead with expansion plans. We hope this forecast proves accurate, but we note with misgiving that since January 1 the recovery curve has flattened out. Moreover, a spring recovery will hardly be assisted by the dismissal of hundreds of thousands of relief workers in April and May, as must occur under the amended terms of the appropriation. Analysis of the Senate voting lists on the cut reveals some interesting facts. The actual population represented by the majority was some 8½ millions less than that represented by the minority. The Democrats who deserted to the tory ranks were nearly all from farm states. We wonder if they were wise to use the overweighted representation of the rural areas to attack the unemployed, and whether their zeal for economy will still be manifested when farm relief comes to a vote.

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BOTH ON ITS MERITS AND AS A SIGN OF THE President's state of mind, the nomination of ex-Congressman Thomas R. Amlie to the Interstate Commerce Commission is an encouraging event. The picture of Mr. Roosevelt as a fellow-traveler consorting with like-minded leftists has been luridly drawn by his enemies; it is a grossly inaccurate one. In fact, while groping toward economic reconstruction the President has often been surrounded by aides as treacherous as they were half-hearted. In his recent appointments, culminating in the choice of Amlie, one detects a belated but serious attempt to rally a corps of associates who have manifested a consistent faith in New Deal objectives. The anti-New Deal coalition, so fierce in its denunciations of the White House "purge," is therefore renewing its own "purge." Against Amlie it has invoked the customary charge of communism, an accusation which any reader of the Communist press would find especially grotesque. The Wisconsin legislature has embodied this falsehood in a special resolution of protest, an extraordinary sign of the reactionary undertow in that state. The fight against Amlie's confirmation will undoubtedly be more ruthless than that against any other recent appointee; the vote will be a token of Administration strength.

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WE GO TO PRESS WITH THE ECHOES OF Hitler's speech still sounding on the air waves. It was not an easy speech to follow. The Führer talked for almost two and a half hours and covered a vast area of boasts, future plans, vague threats, and defensive arguments. Out of the sea of words a few major points emerged; others will probably bob up to the surface during the next few days. Hitler asserted flatly that he would support Mussolini in any war in which Italy might be involved; he did not tell how far he would back Italian demands that might lead to war. He also announced his determination to get back the former German colonies. They were not, he said, of major importance to the country before the World War; now they are necessary to supply the Reich with raw materials which it cannot buy. In the face of foreign doubts he asserted the soundness and stability of the Nazi economy; but in the next breath he admitted that the German farmer had about reached his productive capacity, that the Reich would have to import food, and if it could not buy it for lack of foreign exchange, the German people would take it by force. He did not specify when or from whom. He sneered at democracy as a dying system. He hailed the "victory" of fascism in Spain, but did not discuss his own future relations with Franco. The cultural agreement just signed by Germany and the Spanish rebels indicates clearly enough, however, the degree to which a fascist Spain would be expected to gear into the Nazi system. His speech as a whole was that of a dictator who is feeling his oats. Without announcing any definite program of action, Hitler managed to be both truculent and threatening. Those newspapers in France and England who have already announced their gratification at his "moderate" tone are, we think, either fooling themselves or their public. We find no hint of appeasement in his speech anywhere.

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR OFFICIALS last week rewarded William Randolph Hearst for his long years of service to the anti-labor movement. The Chicago Federation has now undertaken the organization of "scabs" into an exclusive club called the Chicago Editorial Association, designed to put a crimp in the Chicago Newspaper Guild strike on the Hearst papers. Achievement of this organization took some months of effort, but the labor was rewarded when the Hearst-owned Chicago *Herald and Examiner* benignly signed up with this group. A similar suicide pact for labor is now being prepared on the Chicago *American*. Naturally the event has stirred rejoicing among publishers everywhere, inspiring many of them to break the long silence maintained by their news columns on the Chicago strike. These shabby moves of the Chicago Federation should not be given exaggerated significance, for the strike's status is virtually unaltered. Hundreds of men and women remain out, Hearst's Chicago circulation is falling, advertisers have been persuaded to withdraw, and popular sentiment in behalf of the strikers is impressively strong and representative. More than ever it is clear that Chicago is a testing ground for a national publishers' offensive against the Guild. It is also a laboratory for one of the A. F. of L.'s most brazen experiments in dual unionism.

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THIS IS THE ERA OF THE LIE. GOING ON THE theory that the more outrageous the deception the more surely people will imagine that it has at least a kernel of truth, the Fascists and the Nazis lay down an incessant barrage: democracy is decadent and crooked; only dictatorship is truly democratic; only the saber-rattlers want peace; food sent to the Loyalists is insolent intervention in the Spanish war, while the boasted participation of armed Italian legions is non-intervention. But the lie has not triumphed yet, and it may not triumph at all if the people of the democracies recall the truths on which political democracy rests and make them their guiding principles. To stimulate this "quickening impulse" the *Survey Graphic* has just published a special issue entitled "Calling America." Under the editorship of Raymond Gram Swing, this issue is divided into three sections: Consequences of Modern Despotism Abroad, Tests of Democracy at Home, and Democracy in America. Mr. Swing and his colleagues are clearsighted enough to realize that democracy will not be saved by rhetoric but by concrete social and economic achievement—"Its health is its only propaganda." But they know too that no one can prepare a blueprint for democracy, that democracy is "an attitude, not a solution." The will to save it must come first. We congratulate the *Survey Graphic* and hope that this excellent issue has the wide distribution it deserves.

*

THE DEATH OF WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS AT seventy-three ends a career as distinguished for preeminence in his special art, poetry, as it is astonishing for its versatility. For the historian, his intimate connection with the Irish nationalist movement, not only in literature but also in politics, for he served as Senator, will buttress the intensity and magnitude of his poetic achievement. Having founded, with Lady Gregory, the Abbey Theater, Yeats was for thirty years its mainstay, as much through his vital influence on Synge as through his own plays. His other literary activities, in philosophy, in essays, in autobiography, are witness to a life spent in constant and passionate toil, without compromise or concession. Publishing verse over a period of fifty years, Yeats never exhibited any complacency. A survivor of the nineties and the *Yellow Book,* he kept ahead of each successive movement, and the best poets in this country and even in England now acknowledge his leadership. Although his first style was well formed soon after 1900, he remodeled it during the following period when the Nobel Prize came to him in 1923. "The Tower" in 1928 and "The Winding Stair" in 1933 represent the height of his achievement. But he continued with undiminished powers to the very end; two of his finest poems, "Parnell's Funeral" and "A Prayer for Old Age," appeared when he was seventy. Yeats was the greatest poet of our time; he takes his place "with Landor and with Donne," as long ago he hoped he would.

IT TAKES TEMERITY TO DISAGREE WITH omniscience, but a sense of virtue lends us courage. On Monday, Walter Winchell announced in his most categorical manner: "The editors of *The Nation* have checked and learned that their recent blast at Ambassador Kennedy (for being anti-this or that) was 100 per cent wrong." In equally clear terms we must assert that Mr. Winchell is 100 per cent wrong. *The Nation*'s dispatch describing Ambassador Kennedy's apathetic attitude toward the refugee problem was written by an experienced correspondent who had every opportunity to know the facts, and the facts as he gave them have never been refuted.

After Barcelona?

WITH the fall of Barcelona the fascist powers passed another milestone in their drive for world dominance. The significance of this milestone seems to have been appreciated much more clearly in Rome than in Paris, London, or Washington. The crowds that milled around the Palazzo Venezia cheering the Duce and clamoring for Corsica and Tunisia correctly appraised it as Mussolini's greatest triumph since the League's abandonment of sanctions after the capture of Addis Ababa. For those who cling to a belief in law and justice, the loss of Barcelona was a major setback, second only to Munich. In terms of human lives, the Barcelona disaster was greater. But at least there was resistance, and the fight still goes on despite overwhelming odds.

The fall of Barcelona threw financial circles in London and New York into panic, not out of sympathy with the Spanish people, but because it was felt that the event would mark the beginning of a new stage of the fascist offensive. Everyone is asking where the dictators will strike next. In anticipation of Hitler's Reichstag speech, speculation ran rife. It was suggested that he would demand immediate colonial concessions, that he would ask for a return of the ten billion dollars paid in reparations, that he would announce an immediate drive for Ukrainian "independence," or pledge his support of Italy in its demands on France. He did in fact demand colonies, and he proclaimed a virtual military alliance with Italy. While he made no immediate threat, there was nothing in his speech to calm the fears of a jittery Europe.

It is probable that no drastic action will be taken until the fascists have obtained undisputed mastery of Spain. Mussolini indicated as much when he urged his followers to put away their flags until after the fall of Madrid. Once the remainder of Loyalist Spain is crushed—as it will be unless support comes from the outside—Mussolini may be expected to push his demands against France. He will almost certainly act while his troops remain in

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Spain. Just how far he will go is difficult to say. He can scarcely expect to obtain Nice, Savoy, and Corsica together with Tunisia and Djibouti. But he will doubtless demand all that he thinks he can get without war.

Hitler's statement that Germany will fight in support of Italy is scarcely news. The axis stands as the basis of German foreign policy. We can be sure that Germany's military might will be at Mussolini's call when the time comes to cash in on Italy's investment in Spain, especially since Hitler also has some promissory notes to collect. These claims, in most instances, must ultimately be paid by France. Not four months have passed since France repudiated its treaty with Czechoslovakia on the ground that the German demands against that country did not immediately threaten French security. Today it is French territory that is endangered, and France has thrown away the assistance of thirty-four divisions of Czechoslovakian troops, and may be confronted with a hostile army on its frontier in the Pyrenees.

That England will do nothing to aid its ally may be inferred from Chamberlain's amazingly inept Birmingham speech. It is true that the British Prime Minister echoed Roosevelt in declaring that the democracies must inevitably resist a demand to rule the world by force. But the very formulation of what was interpreted in the press as a stern warning to the dictators indicates that Britain has no intention of opposing the fascist policy of gradual encroachment. It will be recalled that a similar "stern warning" preceded capitulation at Munich. Britain's lack of concern over the threat to France is startling in view of the long-established Franco-British alliance. It can only mean that Chamberlain is willing to let France become useless as an ally, and is pinning his hopes for the security of the empire on agreements with the fascist states—assuming that they will strike toward the east. Insane though this may seem, it is fully consistent with the policies pursued by Chamberlain in the past two years, especially at Munich.

Despite the wire-pulling of Mr. Chamberlain, France has not yet been finally defeated. Nor, for that matter, has Spain. As long as the Loyalists have a veteran army of four to five hundred thousand men well intrenched in Madrid and Valencia, European democracy has a fighting chance. Even the defeated Catalonian armies could be saved and reestablished if France would lift a finger in its own defense. Daladier's victory in the Chamber last week appears to preclude such action, but there have been times when it seemed as if the least push would unseat him. Where that can come from is difficult to see. Hope may be found in Ribbentrop's failure to win the Poles to the support of the axis. If a firm stand is ever to be made against the fascist advance, it is important that it be made while Poland and Rumania are still free from German domination.

It is evident, however, that the resources of democracy are running dangerously low in Europe. Unless some dramatic reversal occurs within the next few weeks, both Spain and France will suffer the fate of Czechoslovakia. The event best calculated to revive democratic strength would be the lifting of the American embargo against Spain. For American action would not only make possible direct aid to republican Spain but by destroying the farce of non-intervention enable France to act in time to protect its own frontier. Lifting the embargo would also counteract the disgraceful outcry over the sale of American airplanes to France and give the European democracies reason to hope for prompt revision of the Neutrality Act. It is too late to save Barcelona. But it is not too late to save Spain, Europe, and the world from fascist domination. Another six weeks, and it may be.

Our National Defense

IN HIS first article on America and the post-Munich World, in last week's *Nation,* Eliot Janeway illustrated the extent to which American economy overshadows that of the rest of the world; in his second he shows how that economy is being placed at the service of our potential enemies. We are feverishly engaged on a new arms program—admittedly inspired by fears of Japanese, German, and Italian aggression—but at the same time we blithely supply these powers with the machinery and war materials they need to build up their armaments and turn their conquests to account. If there is a threat to the security of this continent sufficiently serious to warrant our rearming, then surely we must be insane to help make it more formidable.

Unhappily this is not the only example of self-frustration suggesting that our conduct of foreign affairs is solely regulated by slogans and traditions which tend to cancel each other. The most poignant illustration is the way in which we have recently campaigned against fascism in South America while helping it to obtain in Spain a base for new transatlantic adventures. With our right hand we attempt to take the dictators by the scruff of the neck; with our left we bestow a blessing.

The basic principles of our foreign policy, such as it is, are, first, the avoidance of foreign entanglements and, second, the Monroe Doctrine. From the one springs the Neutrality Act; from the other the Presidential declaration of hemispheric defense. Throughout most of our history there has been no great conflict between these two main principles, but when they are put in juxtaposition to make a policy for 1939 they invoke thoughts of bows and arrows rather than of bombers and submarines. Most Americans have developed since Munich at least a presentiment of increased external danger. They are alarmed by the rise of powers bitterly hostile to democracy, fanatic in their efforts to spread their

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doctrines, intent on the magnification of the state both as a supremely desirable end and as an organic necessity. Any physical threat by such states to America may still appear remote. The more immediate danger is their attempt, by propaganda and the contagion of superficially successful ideas, to undermine our democracy—to them both an irritant and a subversive example.

Speaking at Munich on March 14, 1936, Hitler said: "I do not believe there can be peace among the nations until they all have the same law and system of law. That is why I hope that one day National Socialism will extend all over the world. This is no fantastic dream but an achievable object." It is only the fascist apologists in our midst who claim that democracies and totalitarian states can exist peacefully side by side. Dictators know that if the world is to be made safe for autocracy the germs of liberty must be stamped out.

To ideological onslaughts on our system arms are an ineffectual barrier. Our democracy will best protect itself by providing security without curtailing liberty; by devising means whereby the full use of our resources will make possible a full life for all. If it can do this it need not fear the infiltration of alien dogmas. But the fear that prompts our armaments is of more than fascist ideas; it is fear of eventual direct assault on the integrity of this continent. If this fear is baseless, there is no justification for our present arms program; if it corresponds to a realistic appraisal of the facts, it suggests that our foreign policy is woefully inadequate.

At its present strength our navy ought to be able to ward off the attack of a single power. The danger for the future is possible simultaneous action by both Japan and the axis either against us or against Latin America. That cannot happen until Japan completes its conquest of China and the axis consolidates its power in Europe. Clearly, then, we have a direct interest in the failure of these aggressive powers to achieve their immediate objectives. Nevertheless, we pursue an economic foreign policy which brings that achievement nearer.

Again it is obvious that fascist domination of Europe to an extent dangerous to us will come only when Britain and France have been either defeated by the axis or bulldozed into joining it. It is here we part company with Mr. Janeway, who assumes that these countries are already in effect linked to the fascist system. True, Chamberlain and Daladier have consistently played the axis game, but can they make further concessions without risking overthrow at home? Democracy may be ailing in Britain and France, but it still lives. Our interest is to see that it recovers its vitality, remembering that so long as Western Europe provides a buffer there can be no military threat to the integrity of this continent. Mr. Janeway's proposal to boycott Britain and France as well as the fascist powers seems the surest way to force a coincidence between the Paris-London and the Berlin-Rome axis and thus create the very situation which we ought to strive to prevent. It would be more realistic to offer Britain and France economic assistance while refusing further aid to the fascist war machines.

Isolationists of all stripes will assert that any such intervention in European affairs involves us in the risk of war. We do not deny this. But we would remind those isolationists who are in favor of a great arms program that the threats they visualize can only mature after fascism has won new victories in Europe. Is the risk we would run by throwing our economic weight against aggression now as great as that we will incur by letting it advance unimpeded?

This argument will not appeal to believers in unarmed isolation. We would remind them that the present popular demand for armaments is the consequence of Munich. Can they imagine how much louder that demand would be were Europe to become a solid fascist bloc?

The Nation does not believe that in the world today pacifism is practical politics or that America can afford to neglect its armaments. But we have two other lines of defense. We can strengthen our democracy by making it more of a reality at home: we can make the full weight of our economic power felt abroad. While these weapons remain to us, to put the whole stress of our defense policy on armaments is as dangerous as it is unintelligent.

Not-the-Law Hague

THE victory over Mayor Hague won in the Circuit Court in Philadelphia will be nullified if Jersey City's dictator succeeds in having one of his own men appointed to the vacancy left on the federal District Court by the elevation of William Clark to the Circuit Court. The enforcement of the injunction obtained by the C. I. O. and the Civil Liberties Union against the Mayor will be in the hands of the new judge, and if he is as completely under Hague's thumb as most of New Jersey's state judges, the injunction may well prove worthless. Norman Thomas, in a letter to Attorney General Murphy, has called attention to the importance of the appointment, which will be a real test of the New Deal's sincerity and courage. An obscure gentleman named Walker is Hague's candidate.

Meanwhile the higher this case goes in the courts the more drastic are the defeats suffered by Mayor Hague. Judge Clark's opinion in the C. I. O.'s appeal for an injunction to enforce the Constitution in Jersey City was a rather equivocal document that would have permitted the establishment of censorship by Hague's police. The Clark decree wisely discarded this innovation in American constitutional law and gave the C. I. O. an almost complete victory. The Circuit Court in Philadelphia has

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now gone a step beyond Judge Clark. Indeed, if the New York *Times* report is to be believed, the Circuit Court has even gone beyond the expectations of counsel for the C. I. O. and the Civil Liberties Union. Judge Clark's decree did not hold Jersey City's street-meeting ordinance unconstitutional, but merely enjoined Hague's police from refusing permits to the plaintiffs unless they were prepared to forbid meetings of any kind on any of the public thoroughfares. The Circuit Court ordered this qualifying clause struck out of the Clark decree and held the ordinance unconstitutional. The clause struck out, according to the *Times*, was written by counsel for the C. I. O. and the Civil Liberties Union.

The forceful language and reasoning of the Circuit Court will certainly be upheld in the Supreme Court. It disposes finally and authoritatively of the peculiar doctrine by which both the Jersey City police and Judge Clark in his original opinion would have established a right to gag or censor speakers. The street-meeting ordinance says that permits may be refused only "for the purpose of preventing riots, disturbances, or disorderly assemblage." Judge Clark's opinion suggested that police might require submission of speeches in advance in the case of applicants for permits who had previously held meetings marked by breaches of the peace. The Circuit Court holds this whole idea unconstitutional since it permits "the imposition of previous restraint" on the right of free speech and assembly; it declares that the ordinance, if strictly applied, would lead straight to one-party rule, and points out that the function of the police "is not to prevent speakers from presenting their views, but to preserve order while they speak." Judges Biggs and Maris took a realistic view of these "disturbances" in Jersey City. "Mayor Hague and his associates, reversing the usual procedure," they said, "troubled the waters in order to fish in them." Judge J. Warren Davis, who did his best to set up a five-man court in Philadelphia that would have been more favorable to Hague's case, dissented.

Labor's Fifth Column

THE future of the New Deal may hinge on the battle opened by the introduction of Senator Walsh's bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act. Whatever the intentions of Senator Walsh and the leaders of the American Federation of Labor who are supporting him, they have made themselves part of a well-planned campaign to gut the New Deal under the pretense of making a few modifications in the Wagner Act. This effort to emasculate the act is a logical aftermath of the New Deal's reverses at the polls last fall; it is notice of the opposition's intention to turn the Administration's setback into a rout.

In permitting themselves to be used as a front for reactionary business interests the A. F. of L. leaders are betraying their own followers. The evolution of the A. F. of L.'s attitude toward the Wagner Act shows how far events have driven them in an anti-labor course. On December 20, at a meeting of legislative representatives of the A. F. of L. and the railroad brotherhoods, it was decided to ask for two amendments of the act. One would deprive the Labor Board of the power to decide the unit for collective bargaining; the other would take from the board the right to invalidate contracts between an employer and an independent union. Representatives of the A. F. of L. had opposed inclusion of the first restriction in the act when it was being written. Francis Biddle, chairman of the old Labor Board, summed up the case against it when he said it would "invite unlimited abuse and gerrymandering" and "defeat the aims of the statute." As for the second provision, the A. F. of L. convention in 1937 had voted it down after J. Warren Madden, chairman of the board, showed the delegates that it would create a "happy hunting ground for the company union."

The leaders of the A. F. of L. were not satisfied with the decisions of the December conference. On January 8 it was revealed that they would ask seven more amendments of the act. These were procedural proposals that seemed of minor importance, though it was obvious that they might be used to hamstring the work of the board. It was also clear that general rules laid down by the courts already provided ample protection on these points. But the amendments introduced by Senator Walsh on January 25, with the support of the A. F. of L., went far beyond the proposals of January 8. The new amendments in the Walsh bill are openly designed to protect employer interests and do not have the remotest connection with the controversy between the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. The most important of these innovations are (1) the amendment permitting employers to express opinions "on matters of interest to their employees or the public, provided such opinions are not accompanied by acts of discrimination or threats thereof," and (2) the amendment permitting a district court to take jurisdiction in any case and issue writs compelling "the board, or any agency or agent thereof, to perform its functions and duties." The former might permit an employer to "persuade" or even to "coerce" an employee in union matters so long as he did not "discriminate" against him or threaten to do so. The second would certainly permit the federal district courts to intervene at any point in a Labor Board proceeding, thus breeding interminable litigation and providing the delays that are the employer's strongest weapon. There will undoubtedly be further amendments in committee and from the floor, now that the A. F. of L. leaders have themselves let down the bars.

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America in the Post-Munich World

BY ELIOT JANEWAY

II. America Arms Its Rivals

FOR the first time in years national security has become an issue in the United States. The army and navy are asking for a defense program that will make this country stronger than any possible combination of enemies striking simultaneously across the Atlantic and Pacific, and the country apparently supports them. We are laying down battleships to be launched in 1943. We are planning to double our air force—this will require at least two years. But even while such plans go into operation we steadily continue to export to the rest of the world—and principally to the fascist powers—munitions and machinery for making munitions which are nearly as efficient as our own—and much more efficient than the products of these countries themselves. As long as we do this we can know no real security.

We may well ask, Is there no regulation of the munitions trade? Are manufacturers allowed to export their products without regard to the ultimate effect upon the safety of the country? The truth is that such exports are regulated, and surprisingly enough by the same army and navy which clamors for more armaments at home. This policy of military regulation was begun after the war, when many munitions makers went out of business. The military and naval services, justifiably enough, were concerned to maintain the nucleus of a munitions industry capable of expansion to meet war-time needs. The easiest way seemed to be to encourage private manufacturers to enter the export trade in order to keep them in business; particularly since Congress refused to approve funds for "educational orders." With the recent changes in the world's political balance one would expect restrictions to be placed on these exports, especially as educational contracts have now been sanctioned and, in addition, real orders for armament have been greatly expanded. The approval of munitions exports, however, still continues. Last June, for example, the joint Aeronautical Board issued a statement on "Release Policy for Aircraft and Aircraft Equipment" in which the War Department regulations were clearly set forth. A few of the more recent designs for army and navy equipment are withheld for a certain length of time, but the manufacturers are encouraged to export the general run of their products. The services have assumed the right (under the Espionage Act of 1917) to veto the export not only of aircraft, an official munitions category, but of all other machinery—even though it is not officially "munitions"—the export specifications for which are held to duplicate too closely the models used for our own armament. Actually, the army and navy are somewhat inconsistent in their vetoes: planes having a cruising range of 2,000 miles may not be sold to Japan, but machine tools and alloyed metals for building planes with a cruising range equal to that of our best models may be exported. And in spite of the money spent on anti-espionage, foreign inspectors supervising work on orders for their countries have access to plants where highly confidential production is under way for our own use.

With "war babies" booming on the stock market in anticipation of orders from our army and navy, it seems absurd to continue to act on the theory that exports are necessary to keep these same "war babies" in business. Moreover, why should only the newest and most efficient equipment be denied to our rivals? Why should we not keep our margin of superiority as wide as possible by refusing to export any machinery or materials which will in any way increase the efficiency of these powers?

The results of our present policy are painfully clear. The war in China is our baby. The story of how we fueled Japan's war machine during the conquest of coastal China has been told before. Most of Japan's steel shortage is made up by United States shipments. All of its special steel alloys come from this country. We supply over 90 per cent of Japan's oil, copper, and scrap imports. Its 1938 scrap purchases, thanks to 500,000 tons bought after Canton fell, will closely approximate the 1937 record of 2,000,000 tons. Its copper buying in ten months of 1938 exceeded that for all 1937. Its oil purchases were three times as great. The lubricating oil needed to run its complex, high-speed American machinery, like the high octane fuel required by its American airplanes, cannot be bought or refined in Japan; we have not yet sold our latest refining equipment, which derives airplane fuel from low-grade crude oil like that available in the Netherlands Indies.

Now that Japan is trying to absorb and industrialize half of China, it needs us more than ever. Unless it can obtain from the United States machinery for the manufacture of steel and automobiles, to name only two kinds that it needs, its dream of a modern continental empire must be long deferred. Japan cannot manufacture this machinery itself; before its recent purchases here it had not even facilities for making steel sheets wide enough for automobile bodies, much less for increasing its steel

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capacity. It cannot obtain such machines from its ideological ally, Germany. In 1937 it bought six times as much machinery from us as from Germany, and in 1938 Germany experienced shortages that made it refuse to export the kind of machinery that Japan wants. But we have been furnishing Japan the means of armament—high-speed metal-working tools—at a rate 75 per cent above the 1937 record. Japan has been lucky indeed to have obtained such cooperation in its effort to turn China into a private preserve.

The year 1938 also saw the United States emerge as a basic prop of the new German empire. Our contributions to Nazi armaments in earlier years, aside from raw materials, consisted largely of patents for airplane motors,* electrical equipment, chemical processes, and machine tools. But Germany, like Japan, is now facing the problem of developing a continental empire. Hitler's achievement, before Munich opened up the vista of an elastic frontier for German industrialism, was to put industry to work within the narrow confines of the Reich by his armament program. Before the end of 1937, however, the pace of armament production had proved too hot for German machines. It was then that the Reich began to turn to us. It has never been dependent upon us in the sense that Japan has been; even today, so long as it stays within its present confines, our aid is not absolutely essential. But the continued strength of National Socialism depends upon continued expansion, and that threatens to overtax the capacity of German industry. Existing production schedules have been geared too high, and if the burden of absorbing and arming first one and then another backward country in Southeastern Europe is added, Germany must either find outside help or collapse into industrial chaos under the weight of its own ambitious schemes. It can only function on the new scale required by its imperial program if it multiplies its capacities until they really begin to rival our own. We are assisting it to do this.

We are making available plans and parts for our continuous strip mills. The famous "people's auto," so much publicized as promising "strength through joy" to loyal Germans, is to be made by American machine tools, like the Opel cars and the motorized trucks for the infantry; German buyers have been active in Cleveland and other machine-tool centers for several months. In spite of credit difficulties orders have already been placed for nearly a million dollars' worth of high-speed special-purpose equipment. With an ideal of a people as well as an army on wheels, Germany requires increasing quantities of gasoline. It is producing about half of the oil it needs, synthetically, from coal, but this domestic product is low-powered, inefficient. To process it into adequate high-powered gasoline, Germany has now purchased from us a complete oil refinery. If Hitler succeeds in absorbing Europe, we shall be responsible.

Meanwhile, the Reich is purchasing here not only machinery for the expansion of its industry but also the raw materials which it needs to carry on at present. Its oil takings have increased; the monthly rate of its copper buying has more than doubled, the Guggenheims participating with the others in the trade. German industry must gear itself to produce on a scale that present European supplies cannot satisfy. It is therefore installing in the Hermann Göring Werke equipment to utilize low-grade sandy iron ore. By this means it expects to obtain half of its iron ore from domestic sources, instead of only 16 per cent. The equipment is being provided by the Brassert Company of Chicago. Pending completion of the installation, Germany's purchases of scrap from us have leaped from nothing to half a million tons a year. It has been buying on joint account with Italy and England, and many of our sales of war-scare days, supposedly intended for England, are now being passed on to Germany.

It is high time that we ceased to accept uncritically the assumption that in the battle between democracy and fascism we shall find England "on the right side when the day comes." Many people apparently believe that the survival of democracy in the United States depends upon our supporting England against the axis. Yet, we may well begin to wonder whether England will ever give us the opportunity to come to its aid against the fascist powers. May it not have been a suspicion of this kind which prompted the President's alleged retort to the enthusiast who remarked that we might soon have to send an army to march down Unter den Linden—"We'd have to get past the British fleet to do it"?

Any prospect of a change in policy through the advent to power of Anthony Eden is extremely nebulous. The dashing Captain was so far misinformed about the attitude of one high American official toward the Chamberlain policy as to tell him in confidence that the Premier's policy was the only one for England to pursue, that there was no real opposition to it on the part of Eden or his friends, that Chamberlain would continue to retreat, and that he, Eden, would soon be back in office. There is apparently no anti-appeasement movement in England able to overthrow Chamberlain.

It is to be hoped that the tragedy of Spain will dispel any illusion we still have about the wisdom of following England's lead. Spain was the victim of a deal, pure and simple—embargo here, "non-intervention" there. No matter how complacent the British lion may feel, we should take more seriously the loss of Gibraltar's effectiveness. For with fascism established in Spain—already there are rumors, from military sources, of a German naval base in the Canaries—the German threat will be-

* See "We Built the Nazi Air Force," by M. M. Fagen, in the *New Republic* for November 23, 1938.

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come something more than a bogy. German domination of the South Atlantic would be really menacing. If we are to have the national security which is the only justification for armament, we must be prepared to offer opposition to fascism by ourselves.

Committed as it is to a policy of non-intercourse with Russia, its only possible ally, except France, against Germany, it is reasonable to suppose that England does not want to stand up to Germany. For if Germany's is a small-scale economy beside our own, it is an industrial colossus beside England's. Germany's aircraft production is so much greater than England's that it will shortly have several thousand planes more than England. Its steel capacity is nearly twice as great, and its engineering and machine-tool industry is so much larger and more efficient that until it ran into its present shortage crisis it was refitting many of England's key armament plants. Compared to Germany, and certainly to the United States, England's entire industrial structure is antiquated and hopelessly inefficient; right down to the spark plugs on its automobiles and the engines and frames of its bombers English industry is incapable of producing on a standardized and mechanized basis. To be of any use to the general staff, English industry must be rebuilt from scratch.

Considerable rebuilding is in fact taking place today under American engineering auspices. England is buying two continuous mills, duplicates of one of the largest in this country. It was our largest purchaser of machinery and machine tools in 1937, and its orders were even larger last year. We are providing talent, equipment, and patents for reorganizing the English automobile, aircraft, and oil-refining industries. England bought 400 planes in one batch last year, and has been inducing American aircraft and engineering firms to set up branches in Canada, as in 1917.

Our foreign trade is really a war trade arming our enemies. Although our foreign policy is oriented toward maintaining a market for our exports of the traditional wealth-creating type, we are actually underwriting the fascism which is closing the world market to free trade. If this insane foreign policy continues, democracy must realize that it is cutting its own throat. Fascism in Europe and Asia is closing to the outside world impressive colonial areas which it promises to develop with American industrial methods into integrated economic empires that will really threaten the supremacy of the United States. When we have helped fascism to do this we shall wake up to the necessity of playing power politics. The New Deal now has its last opportunity to use the economic power of America. Our exports of raw materials and capital goods to the axis and its backers can be stopped. The corporations carrying on this trade sell far more to the United States government than to foreign governments, and they dare not risk losing the good-will of this large and, with rearmament, ever more important customer for the sake of a marginal export business bringing them into public disrepute. Let the government see to this when contracts are awarded under the new armament schedule.

[*The third article of Mr. Janeway's series, on our relations with Latin America, will appear in an early issue.*]

Bewildered Britain

BY AYLMER VALLANCE

London, January 18

THE British public's reaction to the negative results of Chamberlain's visit to Rome has been that of a young lady saved from paying too heavy a price for a lapse from virtue. At any rate there have been no "consequences"; relief—pathetic or comical, as you please—is widespread that Mr. Chamberlain made no fresh surrender and that the Duce apparently refrained from embarrassing his guest with point-blank demands. No great cause for cheers? Granted. The subdued gratification felt at this diplomatic exercise in political birth control is significant in that it reveals the extent to which popular faith in "appeasement" has evaporated since Munich. Few people in this country believe any longer that Europe can be genuinely "pacified" by negotiation. The question which exercises the mind of the man in the street is how tactical policy should be directed in the face of the imminent menace of general European war.

Italy is not regarded here as the potential aggressor-in-chief or, indeed, as a formidable opponent on its own account. In the clubs and the "pubs" alike, opinion is unanimous that the Duce is a very junior partner in the axis, and that the decision as between peace and war lies with Hitler. Belief is general that Germany is planning a fresh external adventure in the spring or early summer of this year. What worries people here is that there is nothing to show whether the coming move will be eastward or westward.

The riddle of the Führer's intentions remains anybody's guess. All that the average, politically inexpert Britisher knows is that, after Munich, the Prime Min-

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ister promised him that "it will be all right now," but that Civilian Defense Minister Anderson has just declared that "the government is working on the assumption that there is a risk of war within a comparatively short time." Pardonably, the plain citizen is bewildered. He does not trust Hitler, and his belief in the durability of peace is rapidly diminishing. But though Mr. Chamberlain's political stock as the prophet of appeasement has fallen, it would be an error to suppose that the position of the government is precarious either in Parliament or in the country.

In the face of a fifty-fifty chance of European war this year, foreign policy has become for Britain an issue in which party allegiances are inextricably confused. In the Chamberlain camp there is a curious medley of forces, deriving both from the right and from the left. First, one can discern the small but economically influential upper-class group, the "opposite numbers" of M. Flandin and his friends in France, who really believe that security can best be found for Britain—or, say rather, for their own social class—by enrolling in the anti-Comintern front. Obsessed by the "menace of Bolshevism," they cling to the idea that an accommodation can be reached between Britain and the axis powers—at a price worth paying. A few colonial concessions to Germany would doubtless have to be made—preferably at the expense in the main of Portugal and Holland—and, to facilitate agreement, some modification of "democratic license" might have to be accepted in British institutions. But between the ruling classes in Berlin and London, they argue, there is a fundamental solidarity of purpose. Wishful thinking? Of course; but these people are quite sincere, and it is oversimplification to call them "traitors," as the left is inclined to do. They are merely being loyal to their prejudices and their own narrowly conceived interests. Mr. Chamberlain, more democratically minded but equally hostile to the U. S. S. R., goes perhaps half the way with them.

Next, in ascending order of importance, come the advocates of "no war at any price," divided into three distinguishable groups: (1) the pure 100 per cent pacifists, who regard with aversion the rearmament aspect of the government's policy but would rather have a hundred Munichs than one war; (2) the anti-imperialists (represented, for example, by the Independent Labor Party), who would use arms only in the defense of socialism and would applaud "appeasement" if Mr. Chamberlain gave away the entire British Empire; and (3) the isolationist followers of Lord Beaverbrook, who would fight, at need, for the empire, but would have Britain remain neutral even though the swastika flag flew in every European capital. Diametrically opposed to one another on most political issues, these three groups unite tacitly in preferring that Mr. Chamberlain, rather than a Churchill-Eden "stand-up-to-dictators" administration, should be in Downing Street. Chamberlain, they agree, is at any rate less likely to involve them in a war of which, for different reasons, they would disapprove.

By far the most numerous section of Chamberlainites, however, is made up of those whose desire is, not to "surrender" or pay indefinite damages, but simply to put off the evil day. The policy for Britain, they argue, should be to gain time. Germany may march east and become embroiled in a ruinous struggle with Russia; the economy of the axis powers may crack under the financial strain of armaments; dictators are mortal; given another two years, Britain's defenses may be made impregnable; and until it happens war is never inevitable. In a plebiscite this body of opinion would probably be the largest in Britain today and the most solid. It is divided only by degrees of insistence that the present somewhat leisurely tempo of British armament must be accelerated.

In the opposite camp there is, first, the comparatively small but resolute phalanx of militant anti-fascists who hold that the second world war began long ago in China and Spain, that it is a fight to a finish between irreconcilable political ideologies, and that the only thing for Britain to do now is to join in the fray—side by side with the U. S. S. R.—before everything worth fighting for is lost. It is a point of view which commands respect—the more so as many of its adherents have laid down life for it in the Spanish republic's International Brigade—but it is not the attitude of the majority of the Prime Minister's opponents in relation to foreign policy. The main body of the opposition—comprising dissident Conservatives mobilized by Mr. Churchill, the remnants of Liberalism under the leadership of Mr. Lloyd George, and the "official" Labor Party forces—takes its stand on the thesis that concessions to totalitarian blackmail do not pay, and that with each surrender the democracies grow weaker and lose friends, while the dictatorships wax stronger and greedier in their demands. The case for a "firmer" foreign policy is argued by its various proponents in differing tones. Some still make a shibboleth of the blessed words "collective security" and would have Britain believe that, with bold leadership, a new League, or rather Group, of Nations could be recreated sufficiently powerful to curb the aggressor states—particularly if, as they hopefully hint would happen, the United States joined the "active" democratic front. Others admit that the League idea has sunk beyond hope of salvage, but contend that a compact Anglo-Russo-French alliance would still have a sufficient preponderance of resources to call the dictators' bluff. Others, again, no longer attempt to dispute the strength of the axis powers' position, particularly in the air; nor do they deny that "firmness" would probably precipitate general European war. Their argument is that, with every month that passes, the democracies are allowing the dictatorships' military superiority to increase, and that

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since a conflict is ultimately inevitable, it is better to make a stand, refuse any sort of concession, and risk war at once, before Germany has obtained control of Rumania's oil, and before submarine bases in Spain, the Canaries, and West Africa have fatally jeopardized Britain's sea communications.

This school is gaining recruits. The man in the street is profoundly uneasy at the appearance of governmental drift, and is shocked by the discovery that Czechoslovakia is now, to all intents and purposes, a German colony. But this is not to say that these anti-Chamberlainites are near getting a majority of public opinion behind them. There is far too much jealousy and suspicion as between their various political leaders: Churchill, Lloyd George, and Attlee make an ill-assorted team. The peace-loving citizen, who hopes to see the roses in his suburban garden bloom next June, does not believe that "firmness" at this stage could successfully call Hitler's bluff; and to vote for a "preventive" war—which is what the opponents of Chamberlain are accused of meaning—requires a high degree not merely of courage but of conviction that the cause is just and that it will triumph.

In Britain today it is difficult to find either the courage or the conviction. This is not true of the "man in the pub." He is increasingly ashamed of what was done in his name at Munich, and is getting, vis-a-vis the dictators, into very much the same angry mood as that in which his forbears defied Napoleon. But Britain, for all its trade unions and its big Labor Party vote, is still a remarkably feudal country; the influence of the higher bourgeoisie is enormous. And in that social stratum the spirit of defeatism is dominant. The crisis of last September shook to the core the "comfortable" classes in this country. They are well aware of the danger to British interests of axis domination in Spain; and they view with dismay the destruction of British trade in the Far East. In their own minds, however, the recollection of their Rolls-Royced evacuation of London four months ago is so painful that, psychologically, they are not prepared to go through another crisis at any price. Their psychology is infectious; under its contagion mass opinion in Britain is perplexed, irresolute, and more than a little frightened of what the future may hold. John Bull is essentially a sane, kindly, and courageous person; but at the moment he is in danger of becoming the victim of jittery bewilderment.

The Baltimore "Sun" Goes Down

BY WILLARD R. ESPY

"DEMOCRACY?" said H. L. Mencken, "I never have believed in it. I wrote a book against it fifteen years ago, and I'm not the sort of man to change my mind." But he does believe in free speech, he went on, and in limited government; and anyhow his anti-democracy in no sense reflects the views of the Baltimore Sunpapers, with which he has been connected for thirty-two of his forty journalistic years.

Mencken is a bright-eyed, graying, broad-grinning little man, astonishingly Hooverish-looking. The extent of his explicitly anti-liberal influence on *Sun* policies is of interest because the Sunpapers have long enjoyed an international reputation for progressiveness. It was the *Evening Sun* that tore the hoods off the Ku Klux Klan, poked fun at the anti-red campaigns of post-war days, and sent the Socialist New York *Call* $500 for legal defense when Postmaster General Burleson barred it from the mails. The humanitarian ideals of John Haslup Adams, editor of first the evening and then the morning *Sun* from 1910 to 1927, created a legend that is still current. The alliance between the *Sun* and the Manchester *Guardian* is part of that legend. A *Sun* telegram urged Governor Fuller of Massachusetts to appoint an impartial legal committee to study the Sacco-Vanzetti case just three days before the two men were executed. Publishing minority opinions has been a *Sun* tradition.

There are those who charge that after 1930, and most flagrantly after 1936, this background was betrayed. Since Roosevelt's reelection, in which the Sunpapers opposed him, they are said to have become second only to the Chicago *Tribune* or the Los Angeles *Times* in their anti-Administration hysteria. It is charged that they have been consistently anti-labor, especially anti-C. I. O., and that their baiting of red-baiters has been replaced by an attitude which found expression in their adjuration to the Dies committee of January 8 that "of the extremist groups the Communists are incomparably the most important," and their objectivity in foreign affairs by the bias of Mencken's remark in the same issue that "it must be a dreadful jackass indeed who believes that . . . the gang of Communists, anarchists, and other such vermin now operating in government Spain is democratic." Nor have they hesitated, the accusation runs, to pervert or suppress news in furtherance of their altered aims.

Any clarifying evaluation must decide not only whether the Sunpapers are anti-liberal now but whether their present policies belie their history, and if so, what factors have impelled the change.

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Historically, the morning *Sun* is a conservative news organ. When Arunah S. Abell published its first penny issue on May 17, 1837, the bank riots had given Baltimore a dread of democracy that it was long in losing. Abell's journal avoided politics like the plague. Except for objecting in 1856 to the "wilful and impractical theorists" who asserted that slavery was a national issue, it took no sides on public matters until the War between the States, and then its sympathies were with the Confederacy.

Even the stink of Baltimore bossism in the seventies could not interrupt the *Sun's* post-war political indifference. Only when Arunah's son, George W. Abell, grew to be the dominant figure on the paper did it plunge into local politics in the 80's, crippling the Gorman-Rasin political machine and initiating Maryland's remarkably high judicial standards. Again in 1895 the *Sun*, shamed into disowning the corrupt Democratic state machine, was instrumental in disabling it. Nationally, however, the Abells were content to back Cleveland for twelve years as a man who could be "trusted." They supported McKinley in 1896 because of Bryan's sixteen-to-one heresies, and again in 1900 because they suspected these heresies remained in the back of the peerless leader's mind, not to mention his socialistic advocacy of government ownership of railroads. When the first Roosevelt was the liberal and Parker the conservative, in 1904, the Abells backed Parker, as in 1908 they stood behind Taft. After that the majority ownership changed, and in 1912 the *Sun* and Bryan together were largely responsible for Wilson's nomination. From 1912 through 1932 the Sunpapers supported every Presidential nominee of the Democratic Party.

During most of this period the principal editorial writer was John Haslup Adams, a thoroughgoing liberal who, according to "The Sunpapers of Baltimore," a Mencken-edited history, "saw a great modern newspaper as largely, if not mainly, an engine for rectifying injustice." Van Lear Black, genial business man who took charge of the Sunpapers in 1914, let his editorial staff strictly alone except to throw rip-roaring parties for them. Adams died in 1927, and Van Lear Black disappeared from his yacht at sea in August, 1930. The Abell Company's twenty-year experiment with liberalism was drawing to a close.

In a front-page editorial printed on September 11, 1936, the *Sun* revealed that it would not support Roosevelt for reelection. The editorial declared in part:

> The *Sun* stands for competitive capitalism. It is the system which most effectively uproots the unfit, the unworthy, the lazy. It is the system which gives place to the vigorous, the competent, the purposeful. . . . When government controls one's property, government controls one's vote. It is the economic freedom of competition which guards political freedom.

From that day on the constructive aspects of the New Deal ceased to interest the Sunpapers, which saw in it only the evils of unbalanced budgets and bureaucratic centralization.

This enmity has brought about not only perversion of news but reversal of traditional loyalties. In 1910 the editor of the *Sun* persuaded David J. Lewis to run for Congress, and in 1916 the *Sun* supported him for the Senate. When he was defeated in the latter race, he received, said the Maryland Merry-Go-Round for last August 13, a telegram which read, "Never mind, Davey, you'll come back." It was signed by Frank Kent and John Owens, the same Kent and Owens who in 1938, as chief political writer and chief editor respectively, knifed Lewis in his campaign against Senator Millard Tydings, one of their chief targets all through the twenties. When state police estimated the attendance at a Lewis rally at 3,000, the *Sun* estimate was 1,400. When a New York *Times* editorial criticized Roosevelt's intervention in Democratic primaries, the *Sun* reprint omitted the first sympathetic paragraphs. A Lewis statement detailing alleged financial links between Tydings and certain of his campaign subscribers was ignored. A *Sun* reporter, Louis O'Donnell, won the confidence of Lewis men by indicating his desire to quit newspaper work and go into politics as a Lewis protege. Using their friendship to discover where possible replacements in the Maryland federal set-up were contemplated by Lewis, O'Donnell—whose nephew, it was charged later, Tydings had appointed to Annapolis—wrote a story of a projected Maryland "purge."

On the refugee problem, as generally on straight questions of civil liberties—for example, the dictatorship of Mayor Hague—the Sunpapers remain progressive. They attack lynchings unrestrainedly—Mencken's description of the members of an Eastern Shore lynching party as morons who loved the smell of burning Negro flesh lost the *Sun*, temporarily at least, thousands of Eastern Shore subscribers—and have reluctantly favored some sort of effective anti-lynching law. Until recently, however, no photographs of Negroes were allowed to appear in the *Sun*. When the "Sunspot" column, which was singling out prominent local citizens for feature stories, ran out of worthy whites, a reporter was sent to interview some distinguished Negroes, but before any of the sketches appeared the *Sun* mysteriously abandoned the idea, and the reporter had to telephone apologies to each of his subjects.

The *Sun* has been noticeably hostile to the C. I. O., whose statements and public letters, according to Frank Bender, regional director for Maryland, "are as often suppressed as printed." Bender told me, too, that the *Sun* seized on a street bombing and tunnel explosion as excuses to attack the C. I. O., though no evidence was ever adduced to connect it with either occurrence. The Sunpapers' accounts of the recent C. I. O. crab-pickers' strike

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at Crisfield were practically incitements to mob violence against the strikers.

"I believe good reporters should get more money than they do," Mencken told me, "but I don't see why they should fuss over the wages of understrappers." Mencken was negotiator for the A. S. Abell Company when it presented its unit of the American Newspaper Guild with a contract that would have prohibited political activities on the part of employees. This move, it may be said, was probably impelled as much by the Sunpapers' traditional paternalism as by any desire to thwart the Guild. Under the Abell regime it was understood that employees, failing some horrendous sin, held lifetime tenure; and the salaries of ill employees continued sometimes for years.

At the time of the Guild's formation, Mencken, returning from a European trip, graciously approved the new union and went so far as to say he would join it if asked. He was sent a membership card afterward, and held a series of telephone conversations on the subject with a Baltimore member. Jovially, bit by bit, he hedged. "I'm no Communist, you know," he chuckled over the 'phone. Assured that his interlocutor was no Communist either, he then expressed doubts as to his own eligibility. "When I was a starving reporter," he said, "the *Sun* gave me a little stock instead of a raise, thinking it wasn't worth anything; but it fooled 'em." He ended by writing a letter refusing to join.

About a year after the birth of the National Labor Relations Board, the *Sun* pressroom formed a local organization. It faded away, but not soon enough to prevent the Abell Company from being haled before an NLRB examiner on the charge of sponsoring a company shop. The *Sun* and the Los Angeles *Times* are, incidentally, the only large news enterprises still failing to recognize the International Printing Pressmen's Union.

The position of a newspaper may remain idiosyncratic, and therefore incomprehensible to the dogmatist, until an issue meaning life or death to it is involved. A Maryland Congressman complained to me, "The *Sun's* always been liberal until it came to the pinch; then some mysterious, faceless being taps an editorial shoulder, and the policy shifts." The sources of these significant shoulder-tappings may be tangled, but they are hardly mysterious.

About a quarter of Baltimore is Catholic. Among that quarter are the descendants of Arunah S. Abell, himself a Protestant. Cardinal Gibbons, the gentle old Archbishop of Baltimore, whose very enemies loved him, was a close friend of the Abells, and often spent his summers with one branch or another of the family. Malcontents whispered that the *Sun* ran the archdiocese. But on the accession of Archbishop Curley in the early twenties, the picture changed. Curley believes that cooperation with outsiders is a device of the devil, and that the madder the rest of the world gets at the church the better it is for the church's unity. He resented the influence of the *Sun* in local Catholic circles, and from time to time his discontent emerged into print.

In 1934 S. Miles Bouton, a Mencken find who as *Sun* correspondent in Germany had been Hitler's friend in the beer-hall days, quarreled with his erstwhile intimate, and left for Baltimore under a Nazi cloud. As Mencken tells the story, Bouton soon was commissioned by the *Sun* to do a series on Germany. In one article a paragraph six fathoms deep compared Hitler's fanaticism to Ignatius Loyola's. The analogy prompted a mild complaint from the Jesuits, but an editorial letter soothed them. Then Curley, who had been away nursing (in Mencken's phrase) "plethoric shingles around the belly," was apprised of the insult. The Archbishop burst into a thousand blazing little pieces. He demanded an immediate and utter apology, and when every formula that the *Sun* put forward failed to satisfy him, he had the journal denounced from all the parish pulpits in the archdiocese and initiated a Catholic advertisers' boycott. The attack continued for months, until—on the hinted advice of a Washington priest that there was no statement the *Sun* in self-respect could make that Curley would approve if consulted—the *Sun* issued an unapproved apology, going as far as it could; and the furor died down.

The incident allowed the Sunpapers to feel painfully the weight of the church's hand. Though Mencken declares that subscriptions slumped very little and that only one minor account was dropped by a Catholic advertiser, other estimates set the circulation loss at 50,000. Since 1934 the *Sun* has dealt tenderly with the Catholic church. A Protestant minister complained to me that the *Sun* gives from two to four times as much space to Catholic activities as to Protestant. Part of this disproportion may be because the Catholics, for their number, are more active.

It is reasonable to assume that the Curley attacks of 1934 may have affected *Sun* policy on the Spanish civil war. Shortly after the revolt started, a *Sun* man wrote an article in which he assessed the opposing forces greatly to the moral detriment of the rebels. From Catholic pulpits and from the columns of the *Catholic Review*, warning shots were fired across the *Sun's* bows; and a few days later the editorial staff received from the hand of John Owens a note signed by Paul Patterson stating that henceforth articles on Spain must be read by Mr. Owens (read Patterson) before going into print. This order, ending the *Sun* boast of free expression among its competent and informed staff, aroused a bitterness that has yet to vanish from the editorial rooms. *Sun* columns since that time have displayed pro-rebel sympathies, and Mr. Mencken has outdone Coughlin himself in excoriating the "Barcelona convent-burners," the scoundrels "imported from Moscow" by "Red Spain."

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Fear of the Catholic church only partly explains the spots on the *Sun*. It is after all a virtual monopolist in its field, facing only the competition of Hearst's *News-Post*, and it could, if it chose, ignore the Catholic pressure without fatal results. Still another explanation lies in the interests and connections of those who control the enterprise. A search for the persons behind the views of the Sunpapers narrows quickly to five men: Frank Kent, political columnist; John Owens, editor-in-chief of both dailies; Harry C. Black, who owns the largest single block of stock and is also chairman of the Maryland Fidelity and Deposit Company; Paul Patterson, president of the A. S. Abell Company and publisher of the Sunpapers since 1919; and H. L. Mencken, who admits to holding no editorial position whatever.

The views of Kent, one of the first vociferous deserters from Roosevelt (a wealthy man in his own right, he aroused criticism during the last Roosevelt campaign by broadcasting political comment under the aegis of a Baltimore bank), obviously coincide with the *Sun's*, as do the views of Owens, who is a tired liberal but a civilized gentleman. Neither of them is in a position to impose policy.

Before Van Lear Black's death, the stock interest in the Abell Company owned by Harry C. Black, his brother, may have passed 30 per cent, and even if part has been sold, it is now doubtless more than that. But Harry Black is of the same stripe as his brother, who was a close personal friend of Roosevelt. He may be anti-New Deal, but not in the hysterical fashion of his newspapers. Like Van Lear before him, moreover, he leans backward to avoid influencing editorial policy.

The dictator of the A. S. Abell Company is Paul Patterson, who worked up through one newspaper after another until he was made managing editor of the new-born *Evening Sun* in 1911. Eugene B. Casey, a Washington contractor who opposed the *Sun's* policies in the election campaign, said over WBAL last September 9:

> Patterson used to tell his friends that the secret of successful news publishing was in being independent, in having no stock ownership in the paper. But when Van Lear Black died, Paul Patterson borrowed from the banks a total reputed to be $3,000,000 in order to buy out Van Lear Black's stock. This ranks Patterson with Harry Black as the biggest stockholder, and it also puts him under tremendous obligation to the banks.

It is certain at least that while under Van Lear Black's will his Abell Company stock was left to his brother, Paul Patterson was given control through a voting trust. Shortly after his accession to power one of his star reporters, Drew Pearson, was relieved of covering a Senate banking investigation when his stories began to carry a sting, and in 1931, when he reported the freezing of Chase National Bank and other credits in Germany, the *Sun* gave a two-column spread to Aldrich's denial, though events were to prove that Pearson was tragically right.

The last of the five suspects is muddled, fascinating H. L. Mencken. Mencken is pervasive on the *Sun*. He is a member of the board of directors. He has no editorial post, yet he sits in on every important editorial meeting. Mencken, Patterson, and Harry Black were the committee that reorganized the Sunpapers in 1919-20. Mencken and Miles H. Wolff were the original members of the liaison committee that was formed in 1934 between the morning and the evening *Sun*. Mencken and the chief editors of the morning, evening, and Sunday *Suns* faced the Newspaper Guild negotiators. Mencken listened to the 1934 Catholic grievance committees. So *ad infinitum*.

When Paul Patterson entered the office in 1911, his desk adjoined Mencken's. The two men became friends. Patterson not only is fond of Mencken but believes him to be a genius. Moreover, Mencken is a celebrity, and the publisher, like many another small-town-boy-who-made-good, to the tune of $85,000 a year, beams on celebrities. In the *Sun* office Mencken's pungent comments on the social scene live again a few days later on Patterson's lips. Disclaiming editorial influence, Mencken remarked to me that after 1910 he served a while as a "kind of prime minister without portfolio." A more exact summation of his present position could scarcely be voiced.

In the last analysis recent alterations in the tenor of the *Sun* don't go below the second or third layer of skin. The Sunpapers of the twenties were as vehement as the Sunpapers of the thirties against laws, state or federal, to limit child labor. On the other hand, the *Sun* of 1938 is still able to approve Hull's liberal tariff policies. In its palmiest progressive days the *Sun* abhorred woman suffrage, holding that ladies wouldn't vote and women who weren't ladies shouldn't. Centralization of government, government extravagance, and soak-the-rich taxes are no more of a *bête noire* now than they ever were. The *Evening Sun* in 1925 objected:

> Observers sometimes make the mistake of referring to the *Evening Sun* as liberal. This the editors emphatically deny, for according to their definition, "A liberal is one who stands for more laws, more jobholders, higher taxes, and, in consequence, less liberty." They maintain rather that the *Evening Sun* is an old-fashioned conservative. . . . In line with this conservative policy it howls against "spies, snoopers, and agents provocateurs," and deplores the Paul Pryism of income-tax publicity.

From time to time the Sunpapers, and even H. L. Mencken, would put in a lick for reform in the good old days when reform and communism weren't synonymous, and whenever practicable they still retain their traditional respect for civil liberties. But Sunpaper liberalism, like the magic ass's skin that shrank each time it was wished on, has come to cover a very small area indeed.

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Living Philosophies

IX. ONLY SYMBOLS MATTER*

BY EMIL LUDWIG

I BELIEVE in the wisdom and beneficence of nature; but she does not give everything to all. I believe in the power of the gods; but they give the main chance to the strong. I believe in the dictatorship of fate; but fate favors the creative man.

To clarify this statement I must first sketch the path by which I came to this belief. Son of a naturalist and humanist, I was brought up neither by the precepts of Moses nor by those of Jesus. I learned the Ten Commandments, indeed, but the foundation for a respectable way of life was laid in the example of my parents. The widest tolerance toward all forms of belief was exemplified in my father, who as physician devoted himself to his fellow-man and as scholar trusted nature well. He showed his children that over us rules a power which is always the same, though called by many names. Brought up to distrust force and to reverence the spiritual and beautiful, I learned to venerate, besides the Greeks, two prophets—Goethe and Beethoven.

At the same time I learned responsibility. We did not acquire the habit of taking refuge behind the Fatherland or behind our race, least of all behind the suffering of a prophet said to have died for us all. The whole structure of my world would break down were I to believe that another than myself could save me.

And why salvation? From what? The thought of man's fall and his original sin as the medium between God and me, as well as the whole conception of a transfigured Son of God who will save me from the hell burning beneath paradise, is alien to me. I have never disturbed this belief in others, nor have I envied them it. To me Jesus—whom I was later to represent as a great fighter and prophet—is as worthy of reverence as Socrates, because he died for his truth, as men are doing again today.

All development since my youth I owe to one alone. Goethe has served as my leader not only in all the realm of thought and deed but throughout the different decades of my life. Goethe and Nietzsche remain the only philosophers whom I have read; none among my contemporaries is known to me. My philosophical studies, thus limited, set my feet in the right path and left my mind free to approach God through contemplation of his works as found in nature, in music, and in great characters.

Problems of guilt and expiation have no meaning in my life. My point of view is that we sin in falling short in the efficiency which nature can expect from us according to her gifts to us. On this account I do not believe that there is such a thing as thwarted genius, or that a man may die before his time. Nature soon recalled great creative geniuses like Mozart, Schubert, Byron, and Giorgione when they had given all that lay within them. Goethe, Beethoven, Shakespeare, and Leonardo were given a longer time, in order that they might complete their work according to the more measured tempo of their lives. I have no sympathy for the baffled poet or statesman who blames the misunderstanding of the rest of the world for his failure.

In fact, my sympathy for the higher forms of mankind steadily wanes, while my sympathy for the animal world increases. I cannot feel for a vanquished dictator, but my sympathy goes out to any dog struck down by an automobile. However, I do not hold the exercise of sympathy to be a service for which anyone may recommend his soul to God. Nature puts upon no man an unbearable burden; if her limits be exceeded, man responds by suicide. I have always respected suicide as a regulator of nature. But a believing or philosophic man who has pondered upon God should call upon the sympathy of man, or upon that of God, only when in the direst extremity. When I do this, I am unable to determine whether my prayer may still be termed monotheistic.

But it is of little importance, for whether I pray to a single power or to the many manifestations of it, the difference is not great enough to warrant the war of words or weapons that men have waged. What I worship is the creative power, and that alone. Goethe called it *Gott-Natur*, seeking a way out by this compound expression. In the prime of his life, Goethe voiced this concept in an ode. For twenty years it has hung on the wall beside my bed.

> Nature! By whom we are surrounded and enfolded, powerless to step without her limits, impotent to sink deeper within her. Unbidden, she takes us up and carries us along in the cycle of her dance, until we weary and fall from her arms. . . . Although we continually influence her, we have no power over her. She is manifest in her countless children—this mother. . . . She is pleased with illusion; she punishes, like a harsh tyrant, him who destroys it in himself or in others. But him who follows her trustfully she presses close to her heart. Her children are without number. She is miserly toward

* Translated by Grace McConnaughey.

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> none, but she has favorites on whom she spends lavishly and for whom much is sacrificed. Her protection is given to the great. Her drama is ever new, because she continually provides new spectators. Life is her most wonderful invention, and death a master-stroke whereby she may have much life. She envelops man in darkness and spurs him eternally toward the light. She makes him dependent upon the earth, slow and heavy, yet always is stirring him up. . . . She is generous; praise be to her and all her works. She is wise and calm. . . . She has brought me thus far; she will lead me out. I place myself in her hands without reserve. Do with me as she may, she will not spite her own creation. All lies at her door. She alone is culpable, and she alone is deserving of credit.

Since I have not the systems of the philosophers and lack the commentaries of the theologians, I can reconstruct my faith only from the feelings which possess me when I contemplate God's works. It seems possible, indeed, to draw near to him without a systematized belief or form of thought. Goethe has said it in the cold sentence: "Let us seek nothing behind the phenomena; they themselves are the lesson."

This acceptance of the world through the sensuous apperception of it is possible and bearable only to one who is daily conscious of the reality of death but nevertheless makes out his program for days and years to come, as if he were immortal. This parodox is similar to that in which we stubbornly postulate freedom of the will and at the same time believe, perforce, in a fate which must some day cross its path. It was only by virtue of these paradoxes that Goethe justified to himself his constant activity as an escape from demoniacal powers. Belief and accomplishment were so closely allied in him that at eighty years of age he spoke the daring words, "The conviction of my continuation after death springs from my belief in action. For if I work ceaselessly until my death, then nature is obliged to give me another form of being when the present one can no longer house my spirit."

The force of this argument impressed me even in my youth, and I have arrived at similar sources of a faith which rests, fundamentally, upon realistic forms. On this account my belief is all the more easily associated with a pantheism which sees God in all manifestations of nature, whether it peoples nature with discrete gods or sees one all-inhering spirit. Nature seems to me to be filled with a universal rustling which I need not personify.

From so deep a feeling of the animate quality of all things there comes of itself a belief in the symbolism of all being. The symbolic character of every happening shines with overwhelming power into the heart of him who sees each creature as the representative of others and to whom all appearances are but the varied play of the same creative will. Here, for me, ends every question into the future.

Goethe's final wisdom, "All mortality is but a symbol," gives me a similar feeling of peace, for it takes the shock from occurrences without destroying their illusory charm. When I have learned to see the negative and unsuccessful aspects of my work, my environment, or my country as symbolic, then I have learned to bear them. When we look upon the events of our life, in their rise and fall, their ripening and withering, their success and failure, as among the experiments of one and the same creator with millions of his creations, we cannot but feel ourselves encompassed by a circle of circumstance which we cannot break through.

The more definitely a belief in the wisdom of nature took shape in me the less I admired the ascendance of one man over another and the more I admired man's victories over the elements, which I attempted to portray in writing. Not only my excursions in history but those through the woods and mountains have essentially changed in character. The thirty years of my life spent in the country brought this about.

Out of such feelings I have come, in the historical world also, to be conscious of an unseen destiny, of a necessity. It is this that I have tried to express in my biographical studies. One should never represent a man simply as an individual but always as the symbol of a human type, an aspiring child of the gods in battle with himself. To me, at least, individual destinies are interesting only as such symbols. For character is nothing other than the Biblical pound which the master gave to his servant that he might invest it. The amount of the gift is less important than the purpose and strength to make something of it. In my researches, whether in the immediate present or in the past, I have always found more talent that rusted through lack of character than strong characters that failed to advance through lack of talent. Out of this has developed my *moral* concept of history as opposed to the modern "dynamic" or economic interpretation.

Never, however, have I taken the way of the psychoanalysts, who, it seems to me, overshadow the colorful abundance of life with their systematized doctrines until it is a sorry figment indeed. Contradictions are to be found in every human soul, beyond question, and whoever attempts to unravel them by some abracadabra only destroys their fascinating configurations. That childhood and sex are fundamental experiences of mankind was known and shown by Plutarch, but in no one attribute or stage of development have I found the key to character. Sex and ambition are important motives of action, but the play instinct is just as vital, whether in men of action or in men of reflection. It is the interplay of motives that is decisive; from this springs the morality of a person.

A man's contribution to human welfare is important in the light of history, the forum of humanity, but before God the greatest is he who brings his abilities to their

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highest point, he whose personality penetrates most deeply the lives of others. Out of this contradiction there has arisen for me a problem which I have been unable quite to solve.

While I pay homage to the man who, through ingenuity, healing, and helping, adds to the happiness of mankind, and while the conquest of cities and countries seems to me to be unimportant for the land of my birth or for any other country known to history, nevertheless, I am most strongly attracted by powerful creative natures, the men of action and the Platonic, who know how to enforce their will upon others and so to raise themselves a step nearer to divinity. The creative power of conquering heroes is not negated by a thousand deaths for which they may have been responsible upon their way, for such men, as Goethe says, "step beyond morality; they are elemental forces like water and fire." So it is that I am ever more drawn to those who are heroes in the old sense of the word, and that my interest in the saints lessens, although it is the latter, not the former, who contribute to human progress.

But neither by this romantic preference for the great adventurers nor by a recognition of the symbolic am I led to approve the amoral activity of our times. Conquest of lands and peoples has lost its beauty. The mastery of time and space accomplished by technical advances has made the subjugation of one people by another absurd. Mechanized warfare and conscription have similarly rendered absurd the pathos of classical heroism. I grew up in a land of inborn obedience, but even as a youngster I could not but recognize the madness of modern war. I saw the union of peoples, of all Europe, as a necessity demanded by the interdependence of all upon all, just as the radio, bringing us news of the most distant occurrences, instantaneously unites our intelligence.

It was the war that really brought home to me the decadence of our social system. What I saw in Germany of the shallow vanity, arrogance, self-interest of the ruling classes fostered defiance against everything supported by the inheritance of rank, title, or money. For me the only hero to emerge from this war was the Unknown Soldier. Yet here, too, arises a contradiction. An individualist, anarchical by nature, feels himself in opposition to the friend of man who is always working for justice. This contradiction, familiar to Nietzsche, allows me to feel the power and beauty of masterful, highly gifted characters who dominate in the world of men just as there are certain outstanding individuals among animals and plants. But I feel that there are limits to an aesthetic view of the world, and I am dedicated to the destruction of all false privilege, based on inheritance or cunning, until society be so completely reconstructed that everyone has the opportunity to reach the goal to which he is entitled by talent and character.

For the sake of this reconstruction, this equalization of classes, there must be sacrificed from time to time a bit of personal freedom, but never at the arbitrary command of a state. With world commerce making neighbors of the chief cities of rival peoples, the epoch of the national state enters its decline. The sacrifice of the life and peace of a people to so-called national honor or greatness is absurd today, for no people disputes the honor of another, and "great powers" no longer exist, in the higher sense of the term. Since culture has become accessible to all peoples, the question what flag waves over a government building is far less important than what is being done in that building toward the equable distribution of goods. I do not like this leveling, but I bow to a new necessity in the faint hope that a world once made free will afford the spirit more room and peace in which to spread its wings.

But I do not perceive in this struggle the essence of the age, nor would I in any sense sacrifice my life to it. Necessary as it is, and much as I agree with it in principle, yet I know that only the material fortunes of men will be improved as a result of this battle of the classes. The chance which we would give the poor and lowly to learn and to become what they will is bound to raise the average, but it cannot advance the highest achievements, which in all times have had their source in gifted and creative characters without distinction of birth or possession. No more than any one race has any one class a monopoly of the finest exploits of mankind. For among the creative and enlightened figures of history, the great prophets and artists, philosophers and inventors, popes and emperors, there are those who were born slaves, bastards, sons of peasants and the proletariat. The spirit is always autochthonous and not to be brought into being by breeding or by the elevation of a class.

And only the spirit matters, for it is that alone which connects us with God. The smallest discovery in nature is of more importance than a shifting of the balance of power in Europe. Biologists, physicians, and engineers, the true builders of our age, compete to outlaw sickness, to master the elements, and to lengthen life, ever striving toward, and in some degree achieving, the very opposite of that effected by the statesmen preparing for war. And even when nothing practical is accomplished, when only new knowledge of the nature of the stars, or of the ocean depths, or of the atom is won, we come nearer to God.

Therefore, I do not believe in the ideal state, since the ideal can never be sought in the state. I do not believe in salvation through an idea, because every idea must perish as it succeeds. But I do believe that the imagination and the thirst after knowledge have the power to bring me closer to the wonders of the world as symbols of the Godhead.

I recognize God in the construction of a crystal, no less than in that of a Bach fugue. I see Him in the

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revolution of our times which seeks to wipe out old injustices and in the end achieves a modicum of justice. I see Him in the master-hand of Leonardo, as he fixed an unearthly smile upon the lips of his divine creation, and in the caricatures which he made of men's features. I recognize God in the inspiration which He sends me as if in a dream, and in the long labor by which I must carry it out.

Pocket Guide

CO-OPS AND COMMON SENSE

ARDENT faith is beautiful to see, but it is not much help in running a retail store. To build up a cooperative you need the same equipment that you need to run any independent retail store. You've got to know the ropes, you've got to count the pennies, and you've got to like fussing with details.

That truth jumps out at you from two new books about the cooperatives, probably the best that have yet been written. Ellis Cowling's "Cooperatives in America" (Coward-McCann, $2) is short and compact. "Consumers' Cooperation in Great Britain" (Harper, $4) is long, thorough, and scholarly. The story of the cooperatives in America has been one of dramatic ups and downs. It has seesawed with prosperity—up when times were bad, down when times were good. Now it is going up and going up fast, and on a sounder basis than ever before.

Mr. Cowling is an evangelist for the cause. He thinks the cooperatives will cure everything. For him labor unions and the ballot count little. He is so sure that cooperatives are a universal panacea that the reader is tempted to jump to the other side and think that all they can do is reduce the cost of living, make wages go farther. Mr. Cowling himself says of the movement, "It does not offer labor an immediate defense against wage cuts, lengthened hours, or bad working conditions—it doesn't offer the farmer an immediate relief from low prices for his farm produce."

He believes that cooperatives are not socialism nor communism nor a middle road between the two, but that they work toward a better social system by teaching people how industry is run—and by making the ordinary person a property owner. When you own property, people will listen to you. "Those who own—control." In short, it is not the aim of the cooperatives to fight against capitalism or for socialism but to fit the working class into the present order.

In a general way the authors of "Consumers' Cooperation in Great Britain," a group of twelve well-known economists and writers not connected with the cooperative movement, agree with Mr. Cowling. It happened that I read Mr. Cowling's book first and the other later, and I think that is the right order. The British book is packed with information—facts and figures.

All the figures about the British cooperatives are dazzling. Their wholesale system is the largest single food-distributing business in the world. Their flour mills are the largest and most modern in the British Empire. Their banking department is second in financial strength to the Bank of England. They do one-sixth of England's retail business.

The American cooperatives of course make no such exciting picture—the chains and the department stores got in ahead here—but they are at the moment in a better position than ever before. They will profit from the quarrel between the chain stores and the independents. They have the advice and help of the Cooperative League of America. And they have learned that a cooperative business, to succeed, has to stick rigidly to certain rules. Every cooperative in Great Britain that didn't stick to these rules failed. I have room to mention only three of the most important.

The first is that cooperatives must not cut prices in competition with other stores. Instead, they must use the rebate system—that is, give the profits back to the customer at the end of the year. The next is that no matter how many shares of stock a person owns he must have only one vote. The reason for this is obvious: it is the only way to keep democratic control. The third is that money must not be used for outside political and organizing purposes.

Until recently the most successful cooperatives in the United States have been in the Middle West, and have been those which deal in gas, oil, farm supplies, lumber, and staple groceries, products unaffected by fashion, taste, or whim. Now there are rapidly growing cooperatives in other fields, and the fastest growing ones are in the East. They are even beginning to do well in New York City. The first national grocery cooperative in this country, the Great Lakes Central Wholesale Grocery Cooperative, does a business of $3,000,000 a year and has 140 retail outlets.

But the movement still faces great dangers, and what some of them are is made perfectly clear by these two books. Both agree about the tough problem of wages and hours. How can cooperatives pay higher wages than private industry and shorten hours and yet compete? Except in Scotland British cooperatives do not pay higher wages or have shorter hours. But they would like to be able to, and they know that the only way they can do so is by forcing wages up and hours down in whole industries. This they are trying to do by legislation. As to their attitude toward labor unions, in the 1926 general strike the co-ops were forced to be on both sides of the fence. Many of their own employees were striking, while they were supporting other strikers. But there is this to be said—the chances for promotion and the conditions of employment are far better in English cooperatives than in privately owned stores. In England as in the United States the co-ops encourage unions among their employees.

Another danger: it is easy to oversell a community on the idea of a cooperative when the push comes from the outside. The healthiest cooperatives are those which grow out of a local need. In Madison, New Jersey, according to an article in *Fortune*, a group of people got tired of paying too much for coal and out of this grew a healthy cooperative.

It may seem to you that I'm pointing out too many weaknesses. But this is a movement that can be made successful only by those who go into it with their eyes open. J. P. Warbasse, president of the Cooperative League of America, says that in proportion there are more failures in private business than in cooperatives. Certainly the cooperative movement, whether it is going to lead to Utopia or not, is growing faster in the United States today than ever before and on a more solid basis.

HELEN WOODWARD

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

I HAVE just returned from a visit to Washington, where I was startled to find a general feeling of depression and discouragement, particularly among New Deal officials, such as I had not noticed since 1932. For example, I talked with two friends who hold important offices, though not of first rank. Their first question was, "What do you see ahead for us?" They looked gloomy and they were gloomy, and I could not add very much to their cheer, for I was depressed by what I had heard, in the course of a flying trip to Ohio, about the conditions in Cleveland and in Kentucky. Cleveland, with 200,000 people still out of work, is an alarming spectacle; the financial resources of the city are practically exhausted and the authorities are at their wits' end to know what to do. From Kentucky comes the report of a considerable increase in petty crime due to hunger and suffering; one judge is said to have refused to jail a man of otherwise excellent reputation who had broken into a store to get food for a starving wife and children. The Mayor of Chicago has telegraphed to Washington that there will be "chaos" there if the city's WPA appropriation is cut. It seems to me that the last outburst of spending has not produced the results that were hoped. I know there are some encouraging figures, such as increased car loadings and much improved railroad earnings. Still, one hears everywhere of the large army of unemployed and of the failure of new industrial enterprises to appear.

But to return to the New Deal. The discouragement in Washington is due to a number of things besides the slow return of prosperity. The Administration is worried about the growing breach with Congress and the latter's refusal to vote the necessary sums for the WPA, which in my judgment it will have to vote later if it does not do it now. The anxiety is also due to the European situation and the lack of vigorous leadership in the White House. It is in part due to dissension within various departments and a general feeling of weakness of administration, not to say maladministration. There is no doubt that the government has the jitters about the situation in South America, even though the consensus of opinion is that something was actually accomplished at Lima—non-official observers hold the contrary view. Finally there is the outlook for 1940. The men I have talked with are seriously and honestly concerned about the continuance of a liberal government. They do not wish to violate the third-term tradition, and yet they are more and more compelled to fall back upon Franklin Roosevelt because of the lack of promising material in the party. All the people I talked with are bitterly opposed to the Paul McNutt boom. They know that the President does not have control of the National Committee and that he could not possibly put over Ickes or Hopkins or Wallace—Hopkins continues to be his favorite. Everybody seems befogged as well as worried.

One of the curious stories I heard was that Farley is working for a Hull and Farley ticket for 1940. Some think that would make Farley the next President of the United States; at least there are many who feel that a man of Mr. Hull's years and not over robust physique would be likely to go down under the terrific burden of the Presidency. The lesser New Dealers, by the way, are convinced that Mr. Hull is no more in sympathy with the New Deal as a whole than is Vice-President Garner. One still hears a good deal about the Garner boom, but that is obviously a smoke screen, and what people are eager to find out is who is being groomed for the Presidential race under cover of the Garner boom. Senator Clark tells people that he is not and will not be an active candidate, and it is true that he is following some lines of procedure which will detract from rather than add to his popularity in Missouri.

The sad thing is that the responsibility for the lack of efficiency in Washington goes straight back to the White House. The President's followers are uneasy because his wobbling on policy is more in evidence than ever. For example, a year ago he was demanding a two-ocean fleet; after abandoning that, he toyed with the idea—though he denies it—that we should have a tremendous armament program. Now he is limiting himself to a demand for 8,000 airplanes in army and navy, but no one believes that he is interested in that chiefly because of our own needs. It is believed that he wants these airplanes in order to have them on hand for the use of the Allies if they are suddenly attacked, for Washington doubts very much whether England and France will ever be able to catch up with the Hitler lead in the aviation race. In this connection I have seen a letter from an unusually able and intelligent American who has been spending months examining conditions in England. He finds that the heads of great plants believe that it will take England from two to three years to be fully prepared, and they expect a war much sooner. So apparently does the President. It is the hour for bold leadership in Washington, and it is not forthcoming.

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In the Wind

UNNOTICED BY the press, one of Hjalmar Schacht's most intimate friends slipped into the United States about a month ago. To private groups here he confided that he had fled in despair, and he forecast Dr. Schacht's troubles, which had not yet become front-page news. He said that Schacht's parting words to him were: "I'm glad you're getting out now. When I finish my work I don't know whether they'll build a monument for me—or a scaffold."

MOST NEW DEALERS regard the Strecker case, in which the government is pleading for deportation of an alien Communist, as an explosive affair. If the government wins, the New Deal probably loses, since the victory may unleash a large-scale offensive against pro-New Deal labor "militants." A reported dialogue between Attorney General Frank Murphy and Solicitor General Robert Jackson reveals the uncertainty in official circles. On assuming his new post Murphy expressed eagerness to argue a case at once. Jackson is said to have replied hastily, "Why not start with the Strecker case?" In equal haste Murphy explained that he was very busy. Jackson is arguing the case.

ON THE campus of Northwestern University Edward G. Woods, Chicago counsel for Hearst, and H. Richard Sellers, international representative of the American Newspaper Guild, were bitterly debating the merits of the Guild strike in Chicago. When Sellers denounced the management's use of thugs against the strikers, Woods lost his poise and his logic. He roared back, "We have never hired thugs—and furthermore they're all discharged now."

APPEARANCE OF a six-page newspaper edited by anonymous Communists on the staff has created a flurry at *Time,* Inc. It is called *High Time,* contains considerable "inner office" dope, even private memos by executives, and includes the following story. Before leaving for the opening night of "Kiss the Boys Goodby," a play by Clare Boothe, who is the wife of Henry R. Luce, publisher of *Time,* Louis Kronenberger, dramatic editor of *Time,* said to his associates sadly: "If I don't like the play, I'll call my review 'Kiss the Boss Goodby.' " After the review was written it was sent up to Luce's office, and didn't come back for three days. When it did, this memo was attached: "H. R. L. has not read this."

IN INFORMED political circles it is said that two recent blasts against Mayor LaGuardia's administration are traceable to last fall's campaign for the governorship of New York. One was the attack on the police force by Councilman Joseph C. Baldwin; the other was Thomas E. Dewey's charges of tremendous thefts in the subway turnstiles. Designed to show the "inefficiency of LaGuardia's rule," both charges are reported to have been inspired by the anger of the Young Republican organization at LaGuardia's failure to indorse Dewey for governor. Both attacks, it appears, have backfired.

[*We invite readers to submit material for In the Wind. The $5 prize for the best item submitted during January goes to Ruth Rosenwald of Washington, D. C., for the item about the Kansas City* Star *published two weeks ago.*]

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Ferocious Faulkner

THE WILD PALMS. By William Faulkner. Random House. $2.50.

RECENT developments in fiction show various attempts to escape from the basic characteristic of the novel, its linear narrative form. One example is the structure which Professor Beach calls "breadthwise cutting," practiced by Waldo Frank and John Dos Passos, in which a number of characters and series of events are connected only in time and place to give a cross-section of life, instead of being strung on a single thread, or several threads combined in a plot. Another is Aldous Huxley's calculated violation of the chronological order in "Eyeless in Gaza." In "The Wild Palms" William Faulkner's experimental genius devises a pattern consising of two stories, entirely unrelated in substance, presented in sections, which the publisher describes as an orchestration of the "major themes of flight and refuge." The reader must be grateful for a clue to a pattern which otherwise would remain in doubt until the last word.

As a composer or orchestra leader Mr. Faulkner relies chiefly on the brasses. There are few passages of tenderness or sympathy which might be assigned to the strings or woodwinds. Seduction, adultery, starvation, abortion, death, are the phases through which the young interne Wilbourne and Charlotte Rittenmeyer pass in their flight; high water, the rescue of a pregnant woman, landings forbidden by shooting, childbirth on a muddy flat, naked battles with alligators, are the episodes in the search for refuge of "the tall convict," otherwise unnamed. Wilbourne is seduced by Charlotte, and later in their distress is persuaded to perform a criminal operation on her, for which he is sentenced to prison for not less than fifty years. "The tall convict," sent on a rescue mission, wanders for days on the face of the waters in the unwelcome company of a woman and her baby, to find refuge at last within his prison walls. On a last ironic touch of Southern justice he is given ten more years of prison for attempting to escape. " 'Women—!' the tall convict said . . ."

The artistic intention, as always with Mr. Faulkner, pervades the entire book. Of the characters Charlotte is drawn in the round, physically and mentally, a fully realized woman who takes Wilbourne for the joy of "bitching." She is explained by her husband, Francis Rittenmeyer, who stands as a flat symbol of the meekness and forbearance that is more terrible than violence. His appearance to plead for Wilbourne in court, and finally to supply him with poison, puts himself in jeopardy. " 'I'm not doing it for you,' Rittenmeyer said. 'Get that out of your damned head.' " Wilbourne remains throughout undeveloped, a blank wall on which Charlotte writes her lovely but fatal hieroglyphs. He explains his helplessness by the fact that he restrained his sexual impulses until he was twenty-seven years old, too late to understand or control them. In the other story "the tall convict" shows the same ineptitude in crime as Wilbourne in love. His crude attempt to rob a train he vaguely attributes to a desire to decorate a sweetheart as well as to reading legends of Jesse James; his failure to make a good opportunity of escape excites the mirth of comrades and jailer alike. Nevertheless, he has a personality formed within prison; so that the environment is necessary to his self-consciousness. A Thomas Fuller might describe him in the character of The Good Convict. He too has his foil in "the short plump convict" who acts as interlocutor. The woman remains just that and nothing more.

The symmetry of this arrangement of characters is carried out in the natural background. The active fury of the flood which sweeps the tall convict and his unknown protege for days amid the flotsam and jetsam of the ruined countryside is balanced by the passive fierceness of the cold in which Wilbourne and Charlotte endure a winter at the mining camp to which poverty sends them. In these descriptions Mr. Faulkner's power is seen at its highest, portraying the grim cosmic ferocity of nature against which the pitiful melodrama of human life seems more than ever vain and futile. It is possibly a sign of his contemptuous realization of this contrast that leads Mr. Faulkner to tell his story in a style that suggests at times the inchoate turbulence of nature, and again a burlesque of Henry James.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

Personae and Masks

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS. The Macmillan Company. $5.

DESPITE the chronological order of W. B. Yeats's autobiographies, and despite the unity of their smokily undulating prose, they tend to scatter into the separate forms of "reveries," anecdotes, personal recollections of men and places, diaries, and occasional essays. Perhaps the only actual unity to be found in this latest collection, which includes the recently published "Dramatis Personae" (1936) and starts with the earliest of the childhood reveries, is the all-abiding presence of Mr. Yeats's genius. I use the dreadful word "genius" advisedly, because it may be applied to the writing of W. B. Yeats with greater appreciation of its original meaning than to the work of any other contemporary poet. Even his prose, which carries within it the lambent phrase and imagery of his early verse, and which bears few marks of the development that distinguishes the lyrics of "Words for Music Perhaps" from the poems included in his cycle of "The Rose," is sustained by it.

Much has been said of W. B. Yeats's individuality, much that is pertinent and true of his essentially protestant attitude in a country dominated by the spirit and temper of the Irish Catholic church. Yet the "Autobiography," as well his later "Collected Poems," contains more markedly the many aspects of his personae, and the key to their multiplicity may be

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found in the twenty-third selection he has made from his diary of the year 1909: "All my life I have been haunted with the idea that the poet should know all classes of men. . . . He will play with all masks."

We need not be surprised then at the many choices and rejections which are implied or made explicit in the fifty-odd years that he brings to mind in his autobiography. We need not be surprised at his entry into politics when he and the Gaelic League were young, and his withdrawal from them, or at the wide discrepancies in his appreciation of painting, architecture, and philosophy, his contemplation of Blake's system for a universe and his rejection of Hegel, his turning an edge of malice against George Moore and finding praise for Oscar Wilde. In his verse perhaps no living poet has inhabited or at least walked through so many schools and movements to his own advantage. It may be said that at one time he was a disciple of Mallarmé, another time of Pound, quite as in his younger days he wheeled from the influences of the extreme Blakian spectrum of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to the extroverted, athletic medievalism of William Morris, and then turned back again. Traces of Lionel Johnson's diction may be found in his elegy "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" and the poetry following it, and his reentry into political thinking, if not practice, is in his introductions to "Wheels and Butterflies" and "The King of the Great Clock Tower." As he predicted in 1909, "he will play with all masks," and all masks are fitted to the resources of a felicitous imagination.

In the "Autobiography" there is always present that side of W. B. Yeats which veered so closely to the very image of charlatanism and yet escaped that charge by the true merit of his poetry and the power of his imagination. How far his prejudices may be said to have distorted facts can be seen by comparing his commentary on George Moore with Mr. Hone's admirable "Life." It would be a mistake, I think, to regard Mr. Yeats's recollections of his long life as a record of his experiences: it is the quality of each experience that Mr. Yeats remembers and not its literal being as it may exist in memory. Perhaps it is his tendency to write prose with a touch of ornament that is at once the mark of a style and the sign of a mannerism which so often makes his autobiographies lack the reality to be perceived in the best of his poetry. Almost every anecdote that he tells has its reality in a truth understood by readers of his verse, a truth in which the mask he wears is one of the several personae of his being. His prose, relaxed from the discipline he has imposed upon his verse, "stern color and that delicate line/That are our secret discipline," suffers its lack of specific name and place and time; only the remembered sounds of its noises, only the selection of its more abstract lines and colors, only the fragments of its conversations remain.

All this is not to say that Mr. Yeats's "Autobiography" has forfeited the kind of honesty peculiar to all his work: here again we see, if we do not fully realize, how his imagination so often leaped ahead of and sometimes usurped the powers of his intellect, how he was among the first to hope for an Ireland "freed from provincialism by an exacting criticism, a European pose," how he possessed through his wide acquaintanceship and reading an early knowledge of the importance of Ibsen, Madame Blavatsky, Fabian socialism, symbolism, Shaw, and W. E. Henley to the closing years of the nineteenth century. The conflicts and doubts occasioned by Mr. Yeats's traveling with both hare and hounds are clear enough to everyone who has eyes to read. And I know no better example of its kind of literary history than Mr. Yeats's chapter on The Tragic Generation, that generation which came of age in the eighteen-nineties and was to extend its influence throughout Europe until after the World War.

We leave Mr. Yeats full of as many of his seventy-three years as he chooses to remember, and if his quarrel with George Moore does him little honor, since Moore is dead and cannot answer him, the comparative dignity with which he accepted the Nobel Prize in 1925 restores that quality of mind which has made him one of the most distinguished spokesmen of his own "tragic generation." Now that his autobiographies are bound together in one volume, it is to be hoped that an index will be made for them and that a one-volume edition of all his prose will be forthcoming.

HORACE GREGORY

Friend of Rulers

THE CAPTAINS AND THE KINGS DEPART: JOURNALS AND LETTERS OF REGINALD, VISCOUNT ESHER. Charles Scribner's Sons. Two Volumes. $7.50.

IT SCARCELY does justice to the memory of Reginald Baliol Brett, second Viscount Esher, to call him an *éminence grise,* as Professor Laski does, or to underrate the power of his personality by naming him a go-between, as another less merciful reviewer of his "Journals and Letters" has done. He was, no doubt, an *éminence;* but far from being gray, he was a multi-colored and multifarious personality with definite views which he never concealed either from his sovereign masters or from the king's ministers and paladins. Issue of an old family, Lord Esher was made Deputy Governor of Windsor Castle and Keeper of the King's Archives in 1901. From the memoirs it does not appear whether it was his office which made him a friend of two rulers and of nearly all leading post-Victorian statemen and generals or his inherited family position. But whatever pushed him into prominence, his ability as an officer, his great knowledge, his undeniable charm, wit, and humor, and, before all, his unselfish patriotism made him well deserve these friendships.

Refusing successively the Secretaryship of War, the Viceroyship of India, an earldom, the editorship of the *Daily News,* in short, everything that would have given him command over men, he used his great influence always *for* someone, never *against.* And he used it, regardless of personal friendship, for what he thought was best for the country. Though he served for a while (1880-85) as a liberal M. P., he could rightfully claim that he never had been a "party man." He was a Tory in his social leanings and thought democracy "just a rhetorical expression, a word of passion," yet in the coal strike he sided with the miners because the coal-owners were "fighting only for their high rates of interest." And he believed that the "middle class which came into power in 1832 had its day. You cannot mop up the tide of the workers."

In spite of Lord Esher's unbending character and his har-

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monious life, the personality emerging from this self-supplied evidence is not entirely devoid of contradictions. Recognizing that "individual and personal liberty both of thought and speech has been the fountain-spring of England's growth into a worldwide empire," Lord Esher complains, nevertheless, of the undue power of the press and has but little respect for "popular government" as a safeguard of civil liberties. In his opinion politicians ultimately depend on soldiers, yet he believes in civil power controlling the military. Probably the duality of his ego explains these contradictory views. By reason of his birth and education he became a refined type of literary gentleman whose skeptical mind was at variance with his military training.

During the war blundering diplomats strengthened his belief in the superiority of generals. "All that can be said for them [the statesmen] is that they possess the gift of putting into words, eloquent and heartstirring, their reasons for not doing the most obvious things." He expresses nearly unlimited respect and sympathy for Lord Kitchener, though admitting Kitchener's failures in his judgment of men, and the most unkind criticism of President Wilson, whom he calls "the seagreen incorruptible character that produces cataclysms," "an idealist, vain and 'swell-headed,' who thinks he can succeed where Buddha and Christ have failed." He is much more lenient in his estimation of Hindenburg, who is "a fine old boy" and "one of the real 'characters' of the war" —an excusable opinion since in 1920 Lord Esher could hardly foresee what this "fine old boy" would do in 1933.

The most conspicuous trait of Lord Esher's character is his faithful devotion to his royal masters. However, far from being a courtier, he was always frank and outspoken.

Even more interesting than his personality, as thrown into relief by his journals and letters, is his "inside history" of the World War. Whenever in Britain or France a personal conflict of leading statesmen and commanders-in-chief occurred, Lord Esher, because he stood high in the confidence of the parties concerned, acted as an intermediary. His record of the endless intrigues and rancorous schemes will forever remain an unparalleled source of information; later events in most cases confirmed his opinions. ("War is a tragedy," he wrote in 1918, "Peace Congress the farce that follows." The Paris conference, he said, at any rate succeeded in this, "that a future war upon an even bigger scale becomes inevitable.")

His views about the League of Nations in 1919 have been similarly corroborated by the pitiful agony of this misborn body:

> The more I think of the League of Nations the more hopeless it seems to impose this political arrangement on European nations unless you cut deep into all pre-conceived notions, that is, monarchy, hereditary aristocracy, military ascendancy, "patriotism" (meaning some nation or other *über alles*).
>
> However impracticable, some serious effort should have been made to organize a League Police Force.
>
> Human nature cannot be controlled by documents to which a Great Seal is attached. Only the Franciscan monks, barefooted and ascetic, can lure the wild animals to sit on their shoulders.

All this he wrote a good many years before the ascent of "the wild animals" to power. And Chamberlain lures them in vain. If statesmen would read or scholars could act, Lord Esher's memories might become a most useful first reader. History, according to Hegel, is the schoolmaster of mankind, but so far as we can see, it has had very inattentive pupils.

Notwithstanding this regrettable fact, Lord Esher's son, who edited the first two volumes of his father's memoirs (*not* published here), and his brother, who edited the last two (the first of these, by the way, is marked Volume III), cannot be blamed for disregarding the author's "wish to leave no record." No modesty or other desire to shun publicity would justify the withholding of these masterpieces from posterity. Odds and ends of the "Journals and Letters" are similar to fragments of a mirror reflecting the universe. They reflect the author's universal knowledge, the clarity of his spirited mind, his sense of beauty, in short, the divine spark which never fails to evoke the delighted response of those who indulge in the real pleasures of life. Whatever else Viscount Esher was—a statesman, a highly educated soldier, an author, a court official, a witty critic—his memoirs reveal him as *artist*. "The captains and the kings depart," but an artist's work is immortal.

RUSTEM VAMBERY

History of Labor

AMERICAN LABOR. By Herbert Harris. Yale University Press. $3.75.

AN AUTHOR who tries to compress the history of American labor into the pages of a medium-sized volume faces insuperable obstacles. Inevitably important events will be casually treated, and many groups and movements scarcely mentioned. This is the principal defect in this lively, intelligent, and objective study. The first ninety-five pages are given over to a general description of the history of the labor movement. Many of the high spots are touched, but many others are left unnoticed. The next seven chapters trace the rise and progress of seven different unions, presumably on the theory that they represent typical groups. These chapters are in general very well done, but in many spots they are too sketchy, and they occasionally fail to deal adequately with union institutions. Also the steel industry deserves more than casual mention, and the virtual neglect of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers may only be justified on the theory that this overadvertised union has already received more than its share of space. Yet this represents a serious omission, for the problems of the Amalgamated are quite different from those of the other great garment union, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, which receives an entire chapter. One might also take issue with Mr. Harris's opinion on the causes of the failure of the I. W. W. to establish a permanent organization. It seems to me that this question requires further examination. The difficulties of the "wobblies" were perhaps due to the specific industrial environment and the type of worker they were seeking to organize. In fact, the T. W. O. C., with infinitely more human and material resources, has scarcely had more success in many areas in which the wobblies once had a foothold.

"American Labor" has much to recommend it. In addition to the liveliness of its style, its most striking characteristics are its balance and fairness. The author cherishes no mystical

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hope that unionism might be the vehicle for bringing in the new society. He is too aware of difficulties and too well acquainted with the facts to engage in leftist preachments. However, he is not an apologist for the shortcomings of the leaders of labor. In fact, Mr. Harris has few illusions, even about the more recent heroes. He shows the various leaders in their union setting, reacting to the wishes of the members. Even Hutcheson of the carpenters, though his conduct and character are described, is treated with justice. With characteristic fairness the author fails to join in the charge that the labor movement is beset by widespread racketeering. He recognizes that the evil is largely confined to certain trades and is a result of peculiar conditions.

I noted only one minor slip. Mr. Harris implies that David Dubinsky led the fight against the Communist wrecking crew out to capture his union in the twenties. Mr. Dubinsky is rightfully praised for his altruism, ability, and farsightedness; but his role in the struggle against the Communists was secondary to that of the veteran Morris Sigman, whose heroic efforts saved the union from destruction. The author recognizes that then, as now, left-wing factions were a serious internal problem, and he points out that such groups by their energy and eagerness create a whole set of difficulties in labor organizations which have very few politically conscious members. "American Labor" is written with a recognition that the American scene differs essentially from the European, and those who object to "exceptionalism" might ponder the reason why the most highly developed capitalist nation has never been fertile ground for a labor party. Mr. Harris has done an outstanding job. His book fills a long-felt need for a readable and authoritative one-volume labor history. It deserves examination by all who are interested in the subject.

PHILIP TAFT

Personal Legend

THE FIVE-FOLD MESH. By Ben Belitt. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

IN DESCRIBING the arrangement of his twenty-five poems Mr. Belitt submits "a discipline of integration," "a problem in orientation," "a sequence which, beginning with simple responses to the natural world, moves on to an awareness of the personal identity, and attempts finally to establish relations between the personal and the contemporary world." This is not a novel program among the serious young poets of our time—or any other—but it expresses an attitude, a complexity of consciousness, and the obstacles to lyric self-assurance that are more typical of recent than of pre-war years. However much an orientation of this kind has been a recognized obligation of the romantic tradition, it has been thrown into new and dramatic relief by the disorders of the current scene, where blundering events and ideas have multiplied the poet's range of moral relationships to the point of making them either a new means of escape from selfhood or, in the guise of beliefs and cults of action, an often spurious form of responsibility that results in deceiving the poet and the public with the pretension of doctrines too ponderous or impersonal to have any exact poetic utility. But poets who are courageous enough to face their personal world and to make way through it, with its ordeals of sensibility and moral judgment, toward the acts and decisions of modern life are still few enough to make Mr. Belitt's scale an impressive one. He emphasizes the "highly tentative" character of his notations, "the expanding record of change" into which his present lyrics may ultimately fit. In doing so he admits the empirical nature of his problems. He also shows the humility of knowing what severe labor and self-criticism they may entail and how distant may be the final results of his search. Meanwhile he has published a book of serious and, in its best pages, impressive poetry, less inclined than the usual first volume to trade on the styles and mannerisms of current verse, and showing both in its difficulties and merits a critical intelligence that should enable him to grow out of his uncertainties without allowing his positive merits to suffer the ingrowth and humiliation that often go with such discipline. He has the advantage of seeing maturity as a mark to be aimed at, not as an assumption to lay claim to at the outset of his career.

The poems in "The Five-Fold Mesh"—whose title is an initial error—are printed in two groups of lyrics and two of speculative verse. The speculations easily show the pitfalls of the author's approach and method. The first group—five sonnets called "In Time of Armament"—deals with a kind of oracular abstraction that encourages rhetoric and easily lapses into trite sententiousness; the scope of the idea is so general that exactness and sincerity of feeling must struggle to be heard and usually end by compromising on wordy adjectives and nouns. The second—"Many Cradles," a more poignant and atmospheric personal legend—is threatened by another kind of rhetoric, that of homiletic pathos and memory, interrupted by a passage of stanzas in the charged style of Rimbaud and Crane, two masters who alone among modern poets succeeded with this type of disciplined violence and whose model shows up too obviously behind Belitt's lines. It is "Many Cradles," however, that defines the experience out of which his book has come and suggests the phases of personal growth that may be traced in his lyrics.

These lyrics are of sharply varying quality. Some—Orlando's Song, Song of the King's Huntsmen, John Keats, Surgeon—tend toward a literary preciosity that perhaps marks a period of juvenile poetic enthusiasm and seldom rises above cliché of style and rhythm. Others—Scherzo, From Towers of Grass, This Our Grief, The Duel—combine hortatory devices with fanciful imagery in a way that makes for an inert sort of lyric dignity, stiff with obvious stanzaic design and formal emphasis. A similar derivative restraint appears in Canticle for Innocent Comedians, a poem of subtle perception made awkward by too much straining for style and metaphor. There are sensitive lines and figures in these lyrics, but they too easily fall into pastiche or harden into didactic effort, and it is not until one reads the book's finest achievements—the lyrics Colophon, Tarry Delight, Charwoman, and especially Death as Basilisk—that one finds these virtues meeting their real test and vindication in four poems of true and credible intensity, where ecstasy and terror condense into exact allegory and find their proper images and their true form. These lyrics are the heart of Mr. Belitt's book, and from them he must step forward, out of his derivations and prophecies, into the specific labor that will gain

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his work its own character and authority of style. He has chosen in his first book to write too often with ideas. He now faces the task of writing with perceptions and with words, and by meeting that ordeal with his fine critical and moral intelligence, he will find such poems as Charwoman and Death as Basilisk his best guides to lyric achievement.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

DRAMA

Clio and Thalia

THE very title of "The American Way" (Center Theater) is simple enough and explicit enough to suggest that no subtlety is intended. None would, for that matter, be appropriate in a spectacle designed for so vast an auditorium, and, as a matter of fact, little if any is actually provided. But within its self-imposed limitations the cavalcade of recent American history which the Messrs. Kaufman and Hart have conceived and staged is quite effective. Doubtless planned with one eye upon the visitors expected at the fair, it will surely attract them when they come, and it will, I suspect, manage to survive until they arrive. An acquaintance reported to me that he had spent the evening wiping tears from his eyes and the next day laughing at himself for having done so. That is a picturesque but not entirely fair commentary upon the performance, for if "The American Way" contains little that is novel or profound it is never ridiculous. I might also report for whatever it is worth that I sat just behind General Hugh S. Johnson, who chortled once when a member of the audience made an uncomplimentary sound apropos a speech by President Roosevelt, but who later wiped something out of his left eye. It may have been a tear or it may have been a beam.

The authors of "The American Way" have chosen to center their pageant around a German emigrant and two generations of his descendants. The first scene shows him at Ellis Island greeting the wife who has come to join him; all the others take place in a small Ohio town, where he rises from cabinet-maker to rich manufacturer. The time covered stretches from 1896 to the present. There is a cast which must number hundreds, and a long succession of picturesque, often elaborate scenes, including one, finely managed, of a Fourth of July picnic in 1908. Usually, however, each is concerned with some memorable incident in our recent past, such as the Armistice, Lindbergh's flight, Hoover's second campaign, and the beginning of the depression. Nearly all are, as they should be, readily accepted as typical, and yet nearly all manage somehow to avoid the merely expected; so that one enjoys the pleasure of recognition without, as is so often the case in similar spectacles, finding it distressingly easy to guess exactly what is coming next.

The last scene shows a public funeral for the central character, who has been killed by a mob at a meeting of revolutionists about to initiate his grandson into a secret order. The exact nature of their doctrine is not specified, though

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they suggest fascists of some sort, and various spectators have objected for one reason or another to this conclusion. Some have said that artistic as well as commercial considerations require a somewhat less depressing note at the end of a cavalcade of this sort, and perhaps there are some grounds for this objection. To it might be added another, namely, that an event which is so far at least plainly extraordinary is unsatisfactory as the last of a series of happenings all the rest of which are typical. But there can be little doubt that the performance as a whole is surprisingly successful, and that while never aspiring to be novel or profound it is never fatuous or vulgar. Any spectacle intended to appeal to a vast public not only must avoid subtlety but must, in addition, state its thesis in terms broad enough and general enough to win the assent of persons so diverse in temperament and convictions that only the broadest and most general sort of assent "in principle" is possible. For that reason "The American Way" presents rather than interprets the recent past and is doctrinaire only to the extent of assuming in the audience an admiration for this nation and some sort of hope for a future not wholly discontinuous with the past. The remarkable thing is that it manages at the same time to avoid the fatuousness which such broad appeals are very likely to exhibit and makes it difficult to imagine how a patriotic pageant which seeks to unite the largest possible number of citizens upon some common ground could be more successfully managed. It is decidedly not caviar to the general, but there is no reason why it should make the judicious grieve.

Noel Coward and Beatrice Lillie are, I suppose, undoubtedly caviar of some kind, but they are caviar of a sort for which a pretty numerous public has cultivated a taste; and if the revue which Mr. Coward has written might not quite fill the Center Theater, it seems to be attracting more would be spectators than can get into the Music Box. It is almost exclusively Miss Lillie's show—so much so that most of the numbers in which she does not appear seem mere fillers and leave one remembering little except one piece of bravura nonsense in which Richard Hayden appears as a cockney musical-hall artist upon whom God has lavished a unique gift for imitating fish, and gives the insanest performance seen here since Reginald Gardiner imitated such things as a revolving lighthouse and a style of wallpaper. But if Miss Lillie is very nearly the whole show, she has never been better and seldom if ever had material better suited to her style. Her numbers range from bits of utter nonsense like the first, in which one is led to expect the entrance of a Watteau princess and gets instead Miss Lillie on a white horse singing the Ride of the Valkyrie, to satiric sketches like "Weary of It All," in which she impersonates a bored staged favorite who manages to annex everything in sight while maintaining the air of being beyond desire. It is Miss Lillie at her best, and Miss Lillie's best is unequaled in its kind.

At the Martin Beck the D'Oyly Carte Company is continuing in a repertory of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RESORT

The Index to Volume 147 of *The Nation,* covering the period of July through Dec., 1938, is now ready for distribution at 15c a copy.

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FILMS

IF THE spectacular picture "Gunga Din" (RKO Radio) had been made by a German or an Italian company and had shown Italian soldiers killing Abyssinians or Japanese invaders murdering Chinese peasants, the government-controlled fascist producers could have used the script by our versatile twins Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur without changing one line or one action. Only the names and costumes would be different. Three Black Shirts could not indulge in an orgy of brutality with more gusto than do the three Khaki Shirts (Cary Grant, Victor McLaglen, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.), who dash laughingly across the screen killing right and left and exhibiting themselves as practically bullet-proof by nature. The picture is ghastly and disgusting to one who knows what war really looks like. But you are expected to leave your better feelings and your brain at home. That such a picture should be produced in the greatest and freest democracy of the world and with the approval of the Hays office and the state boards of censorship, which protect us

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from the sight of a baby being born but have nothing against the inspiring influence of wholesale massacres, may be only a symptom of the cultural level on which the great industry and its mentors operate. Provided it is hypocritically disguised, the appeal to the lowest instincts is still legitimate business.

There is only one plausible character in the picture—the others are inhuman dummies—Gunga Din, the dumb water-carrier whom the Hollywood merchants of death borrowed from Rudyard Kipling's poem. Sam Jaffe plays him with the touching smile of the stupid Hindu who falls for the "regimentals" of India's oppressors. One would like to see more of him, but Gunga Din does little more than give a name to the picture and provide an anticlimax. It is not only a bad joke to have Kipling, who saw his first battle as Boer War correspondent in Africa, appear at the end and write his poem in time for the commander to recite it over poor dead Gunga Din; it is a cynically intended, pseudo-serious trick that puts over the whole fraud.

So much for the content of "Gunga Din." In form it is a technically perfect show (directed and produced by George Stevens), in which fist fights, cavalry charges of thousands of riders, and artillery barrages are flawlessly represented.

The same company, RKO Radio, provides entirely different fare in the production of "Boy Slaves" (direction: P. J. Wolfson, script Albert Bein and Ben Orkow). A proletarian youngster runs away from home in order to make money which he can send back to mother. On the road he is forced to join a gang of homeless kids, neglected victims of society, who steal to keep alive. They are caught and handed over to an honest citizen who gives them jobs on his turpentine farm, where he works them to exhaustion. The kids revolt and are only saved by state troopers from being killed by their exploiter in defense of his property rights. After the final trial an enlightened judge sends them to an institution where they will be educated, and puts their accuser in jail.

I sketch this vague outline of an excellent script deliberately so as not to give away a story which is full of life and more exciting in its dramatic developments than a dozen adventure pictures. The theme is timely—the deadline for this column coincides with the deadline for three young boys in Sing Sing; it is true; and it concerns us all. Moreover, it is treated with honesty and real feeling, and is played in an admirably realistic style; the youngsters are better than the "Dead End Kids," not touched yet by Broadway. Special mention should go to Roger Daniel, James McCallion, and Anne Shirley, who escapes seduction and tells a lot with chaste reticence. Certain shortcomings, especially the lack of explanation for the inhuman behavior of the boys' exploiters, could have been easily overcome if more producer's zeal and money had been invested. Nevertheless, this Class B picture triumphs over the Gunga Dins with real suspense, tragedy, and appealing hope. Every friend of the movie art should see it—for his own good and to encourage Hollywood to do more honest work of this kind.

"The Great Man Votes" (RKO Radio) rises above Hollywood stereotypes, but only on feeble wings, ending its flight before it really gets started. John Barrymore gives an interesting comic character study.

FRANZ HOELLERING

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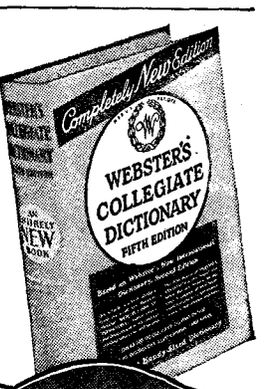

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Letters to the Editors

Would Have Us Go Farther

Dear Sirs: Michael Williams's letter in *The Nation* for January 21 struck me as being just about as confused as any defense of the Catholic church, especially during the present world crisis, is likely to be. But *The Nation's* reply to it seemed to me to be equally, and a good deal less pardonably, confused.

One does not have to be much of a Marxist to realize that the position of the Catholic church, particularly in regard to social and political affairs, has always been determined by policies of expediency. With this in mind, it is not difficult to understand how the Pope can issue encyclicals against Hitler at the same time that he is sending messages of encouragement to General Franco. The Catholic church will support any regime, fascist or otherwise, which does not seek to destroy its power or to curtail its financial resources. According to *The Nation,* "the Pope's stand on racism has been magnificent." But we can all be sure that if Hitler, tomorrow, were to order every German citizen to become a member of the Catholic church, Nazi storm troopers could beat up all the Jews in the country without fear of another "magnificent" reprimand from the Pope.

You state that you are compelled "to condemn specific offenses, while making it clear beyond doubt that [you] are not attacking the body of Catholic laity or the church as a religious institution." How can you possibly make such a distinction? Do you believe that these individual Catholic officials and laymen whom you rightly condemn have been speaking only for themselves? Of what significance are their utterances unless they are supported by the policies of the church itself? And how many among the laity or the priesthood have come out in open denunciation of these policies? Those who have deviated in any respect from what we may call the Catholic "line" have in no way influenced that line; those, for example, who have openly supported the Loyalist cause have not prevented the Pope from rendering spiritual, or the majority of lay Catholics throughout the world from rendering material, assistance to Franco. No, it is not individual laymen, priests, and bishops but the church itself which must be attacked and exposed, over and over again, if certain ideals are to be realized and certain causes are to survive.

HELEN NEVILLE

Brooklyn, January 26

A Service to Religion

Dear Sirs: It is very disturbing to observe a continuous don't-dare-criticize-us attitude among prominent clergymen and laymen of the Catholic church.

Since the early days of the joint Nazi-Fascist military assault upon the Republic of Spain statements and opinions concerning that affair by persons belonging to the Catholic church have displayed unconcealed fanatical hostility toward all whose views do not happen to be in full accord with their own.

Another characteristic of the writings of these persons is a clearly distinguishable bias in favor of fascism, which they rarely condemn and then only with obvious reluctance.

The editors' reply to Michael Williams's letter of protest in *The Nation* of January 21 deserves the warmest approval from every fair-minded person. By promising to fight those whom they regard as enemies of everything they value, they are rendering a great service not only to the Catholic church but to religion in its universal and most noble sense, which, in agreement with Thomas Paine, I take to be: "Believe in one God, and no more; hope for happiness beyond this life; believe in the equality of man; believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy."

A. GARCIA DIAZ

New York, January 24

Welcome Aid

Dear Sirs: The delegate of the Sanitary Services at the Central Armies has just received from the representative of the C. S. I. the ambulance sent by the readers of *The Nation.*

I am glad to write again to thank everybody for their valuable help. Any material that contributes to the welfare of our men is a most useful gift. They are fighting very hard for the liberty of Spain, and the aid of our friends in America is always welcome.

J. PUCHE ALVAREZ,
Head of the Sanitary Services

Barcelona, December 30

World's Fair Poem

Dear Sirs: A National Poetry Contest is being conducted by the Academy of American Poets to select the official poem of the New York World's Fair. Poems submitted must be on the subject of "the world of tomorrow," the original work of an American poet, and not previously published. A first prize of $1,000 and five additional prizes of $100 each will be awarded. The judges are William Rose Benét, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, and Louis Untermeyer. Further information and entry blanks may be obtained from the Academy of American Poets, 435 East 52d Street.

MARIE BULLOCK, Director

New York, January 15

CONTRIBUTORS

AYLMER VALLANCE is a London journalist who contributes frequently to the London *New Statesman and Nation.*

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HORACE GREGORY, poet and literary critic, will shortly publish a study of the traditions behind modern literature entitled "Makers and Ancestors."

RUSTEM VAMBERY, formerly professor of sociology at Budapest, is now in the United States on a lecture trip.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL is the author of "Literary Opinion in America."

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